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**The concept of Time  
in Origen**

Ph.D. Thesis  
by  
**Panayiotis Tzamalikos**

December 1986





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To My Mother  
**Maritsa**  
for everything

This is a Dissertation for the Degree of Ph.D. in Philosophy. The research for and composition of it were conducted at the Faculty of Divinity, University of Glasgow.

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**P. T.**

## Abbreviations

### **1. Origen's works.**

<i>Cels</i>	Contra Celsum.
<i>Dial</i>	Dialogus cum Heraclide.
<i>Eng</i>	De Engastrimytho.
<i>epAfr</i>	Epistula ad Africanum.
<i>epGr</i>	Epistula ad Gregorium Thaumaturgum.
<i>homGen</i>	Homiliae 1-16 in Genesim.
<i>commGen</i>	Fragmenta ex Commentariis in Genesim.
<i>selGen</i>	Selecta in Genesim.
<i>adnotGen</i>	Adnotationes in Genesim.
<i>homEx</i>	Homiliae in Exodum.
<i>commEx</i>	Fragmentum ex commentariis in Exodum.
<i>selEx</i>	Selecta in Exodum.
<i>adnotEx</i>	Adnotationes in Exodum.
<i>homLev</i>	Homiliae in Leviticum.
<i>selLev</i>	Selecta in Leviticum.
<i>homNum</i>	Homiliae in Numeris.
<i>selNum</i>	Selecta in Numeris.
<i>selDeut</i>	Selecta in Deuteronomium.
<i>adnotDeut</i>	Adnotationes in Deuteronomium.
<i>homJos</i>	Homiliae in Josuam.
<i>selJos</i>	Selecta in Josuam.
<i>adnotJos</i>	Adnotationes in Josuam.
<i>selJud</i>	Selecta in Iudices.
<i>adnotJud</i>	Adnotationes in Iudices.
<i>frRuth</i>	Fragmentum in Ruth.
<i>frReg</i>	Fragmenta 1-22 in Reges.
<i>selJob</i>	Selecta in Job.
<i>enarrJob</i>	Enarrationes in Job.
<i>selPs</i>	Selecta in Psalmi.
<i>excPs</i>	Excerpta in Psalmi.
<i>commProv</i>	Fragmenta ex commentariis in Proverbia.
<i>expProv</i>	Exposita in Proverbia.
<i>frProv</i>	Fragmenta in Proverbia.
<i>Cant</i>	Commentarius in Canticum Canticorum.
<i>minCan</i>	Fragmentum ex commentario minore in Canticum Canticorum.
<i>homJer</i>	Homiliae 1-20 in Jeremiam.
<i>fr21Jer</i>	Fragmentum ex homiliae 21 in Jeremiam.
<i>fr39Jer</i>	Fragmentum ex homiliae 39 in Jeremiam.
<i>fr1-71Jer</i>	Fragmenta 1-71 ex homiliis in Jeremiam.



<i>fr1-118Lam</i>	Fragmenta 1-118 in Lamentationes.
<i>frLam</i>	Fragmentum in Lamentationes.
<i>frEz</i>	Fragmenta in Ezechiel.
<i>selEz</i>	Selecta in Ezechiel.
<i>frOs</i>	Fragmentum ex commentariis in Oseam.
<i>fr1,2Matt</i>	Fragmenta ex commentariis in Matthaeum 1,2.
<i>commMatt</i>	Commentariorum in Matthaeum libri 10-17.
<i>frMatt</i>	Fragmenta in Matthaeum.
<i>comm.ser.Matt</i>	Commentariorum series 1-145 in Matthaeum.
<i>homLuc</i>	Homiliae 1-39 in Lucam.
<i>frLuc</i>	Fragmenta 1-112 in Lucam.
<i>commJohn</i>	Commentarii in Joannim.
<i>frJohn</i>	Fragmenta 1-140 in Joannim.
<i>homAct</i>	Fragmentum ex homiliis in Acta Apostolorum.
<i>commRom</i>	Commentarii in Romanos.
<i>comm I Cor</i>	Fragmenta ex commentariis in I Cor.
<i>commEph</i>	Fragmenta ex commentariis in Ephesios.
<i>frHeb</i>	Fragmenta in Hebraeos.
<i>exhMar</i>	Exhortatio ad Martyrium.
<i>deOr</i>	De Oratione.
<i>Phil</i>	Philocalia.
<i>Princ</i>	De Principiis. (P. Koetschau).
<i>frRes</i>	Ex Libro Secundo Origenis de Resurrectione.
<i>Res</i>	Fragmenta de resurrectione.

## 2. Other works.

ACO	Schwartz, E. <i>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</i> .
BGF	Bibliotheca of the Greek Fathers. (The numbers indicate volume and page).
<i>epAv</i>	Jerome, <i>Epistula ad Avitum</i> .
<i>FP</i>	G.W.Butterworth (tr.), <i>Origen on First Principles</i> .
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte.
L. and S.	Liddell, H.G. - Scott, R. <i>A Greek - English Lexicon</i> .
<i>libOr</i>	Justinianus Imperator. <i>Liber adversus Origenem</i> (or, <i>Epistula ad Mennam Constantinopolitanum</i> ).
M.	J.P. Migne, <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> .
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, <i>Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio</i> .
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta. (The numbers indicate volume, page and verses).
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur.

## Synopsis

The logical course of this work stands in a kind of correspondence with the very way in which Origen regards the reality of time, its origin and its perspectives. Thus the procedure in treating the problem is: reality before time; time proper; fundamental principles which determine the conception of time proper; certain aspects of function in time, which establish a certain character of it; the conception of *eternal*; the end of time and the visualization of the eschatological reality.

In chapter 1 we argue that Origen holds a notion of God Himself quite distinct from the conception of God as Creator. We argue that there is an ontological priority of the former notion not only to the latter, but also to any conception of God (such as Judge, Provident, etc.). This distinction is fundamental in order to rebut current views which employ the usual articulation typically attributed to Platonism: That is, the allegation that Origen cannot think of God without *necessarily* thinking of Him as Creator. The crucial point in this distinction is Origen's conception of God's *will*, and how this will is exercised, namely the benevolent character of this will and its freedom, which in the final analysis attributes to creation a *contingent* and not any necessary character.

As our purpose, in this chapter, is to clarify where time exists and time does not exist, and since time is defined in close relation to the world, it has been necessary to treat Origen's conception of creation. There is an enormous number of scholars who have to be rebutted -but not an equally vast number of views.

Thus, a vast number of scholars attribute to Origen a Neoplatonic conception of the world and its relation to God. If they touch on the problem at all, these interpreters normally accept that Origen held that the divine reality is a timeless one. But they concede this notion in a general context of regarding Origen as a Platonist and Neoplatonist.

Others (such as P. Plass) attribute to him a kind of "sacred time" which stands in an undetermined extent between God and men. They, too, regard Origen as a Neoplatonist. But since the Neoplatonic world-picture is one of continuity from higher to lower levels of reality, such scholars cannot actually make any clear affirmation as to where this "sacred time" exists and where it does not exist. This is due to their failure to grasp Origen's world-picture and his conception of the relation between God and the world -conceptions which are quite different from the respective Neoplatonic ones.

We argue that Origen held that the divine reality is timeless and the world is temporal. But this notion of timelessness in Origen's thought has nothing to do with either the Platonic dialectics or the Neoplatonic world-picture. Any resemblance to Platonism is both superficial and coincidental nor does it constitute any essential dependence of Origen's thought on Platonism. Furthermore, the conception and definition of *αἰών* in Origen constitutes a radical break with Platonism -a point on which we elaborate later on. Besides, by the term "world", it is not human beings only, but rational creatures in general that are suggested. For the main distinction in Origen's theology is not *God-men* but *God-rational creatures* living in various particular spaces which comprise the one, single, world. This world is entirely material and regarded as separated from God by a radical *hiatus*, mainly portrayed in terms of space and time and expressed through the articulation of the world being *out* of God, or being *down*. We argue, therefore, that Origen's world-picture is not the Platonic or Neoplatonic

one and we devote an entire section in order to rebut the most entrenched among all the erroneous allegations about Origen's views: That is, to rebut the myth that Origen held a doctrine such as the so-called "eternity of creation". This is the last section of chapter 1, and all the preceeding analyses in that chapter have a beating on it.

Having seen the extent of timelessness and time (and rebutted any notion of "sacred time"), we then examine time proper in chapter 2. In the first section we expound all those elements which constitute the *essence* of time proper. Further, we examine fundamental conceptions which are closely related to time proper, namely prolongation of time and causality. Although it cannot be sustained that they pertain to the essence of time, they nevertheless determine the conception of it so decisively that if, hypothetically, they were taken away, then one would have to speak about *another* conception of time -entirely different from that of Origen's and indeed very close to that of certain Greek schools of thought.

As Origen's fundamental conception of time as *διάστημα* (extension) is of Stoic origin, we expound the terms which essentially determine Origen's conception of time and compare their content with that which they had in the Stoics. Thus the radical transformations, which he established in the conception of the problem from a Christian point of view, become apparent. Similarly, we show how radically different is his conception of time as *διάστασις* (dimension) from the Neoplatonic one.

In this chapter we have the opportunity to provide answers to long-standing questions. Thus we prove that it was Origen's views which constitute Augustine's source of theory of time -a question which hitherto has been regarded as a "difficult question" (H.I. Marroù, 1949). We rebut J. Callahan's assertion (1958) that Augustine's source was Basil of Caesarea (although Callahan admits that it is a "difficult

question" and a "mystery" how Augustine would have read Basil, who was not translated in Latin). We show that Basil only *repeated* Origen's own words on the problem of time proper. R. Sorabji (1983) recognizes the problem, he speculates a source some later Aristotelians but (due to Augustine's slowness in reading Greek) he says that he cannot suggest it as an answer. Therefore, we show the large extent to which Augustine is indebted to Origen's conception of time. And further, that the terminology established by him exerted a decisive influence upon a vast number of Christian writers in the ensuing centuries. We also show that when they did not follow Origen's views entirely, (such as Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus in the definition of *αἰών*), they came close to Platonic conceptions, albeit Origen had already established an inspired break with Platonism on this point. The same happened with Augustine, who came close to Neoplatonism since (for one reason or another) he was unable to follow Origen's conception of time as a *dimension* all the way. Further, we argue (against R. Sorabji) that it was not Philoponus but Origen who argued that the world *must* have a beginning, using the notion of *infinite* in his arguments. We also rebut the same author who attributes Origen's articulations about divine reality to Basil, Gregory of Nyssa and Philoponus -much more because, in one case, he regards Gregory's *echoing* of Origen's views as an "answer" of Gregory to Origen. Besides, we adduce the necessary evidence in order to eliminate the present confusion as to whether or not the Stoics held that only what is *finite* is *knowable*. We show that they did -but not on the evidence which R.T. Wallis adduces, which proves nothing of the sort, creates confusion and is currently reasonably challenged. However, we argue that Origen's conception of the relation of what is finite and what is knowable had nothing to do with the Stoic argumentation, as it has falsely been asserted hitherto.

Having seen Origen's view of time proper as well as fundamental

principles which determine the conception of it, we go ahead with the enquiry of certain functions *in* time, which establish a certain character of it. This is the subject discussed in chapter 3. The conceptions of prolongation of time and causality raise the question of the existence of human being throughout an aeon. We enquire in the event of Incarnation of Christ and its significance in Origen's thought; that is, we examine how decisive this event is deemed in forming a theology of history, -by "history" meaning the origin and ultimate perspectives of the entire world -and not only of human beings. How the function of *prophecy* is perceived and what is the actual significance of *kairos* (quite different from some modern accounts of it) -these are questions, the treatment of which renders the character of Origen's time a *teleological* and, nonetheless, a *dramatic* one.

We have entitled chapter 4 as "Time and the notion of *eternal*", deliberately avoiding to use the term "eternity". Not only because this non-scriptural term is not used by Origen, but mainly because the notion of *eternal* is attributed to no less than three different realities. It is one thing to speak of "eternal God", but it is quite another to speak of "eternal life" and to speak of "eternal death" alludes to a completely different, namely a third, reality. The term *eternal* is a homonym, namely it is a word used to denote different realities. As we stress in the Introduction, the significance of homonyms is of utmost significance in studying Origen's thought. Many misconceptions of his thought are due to failure to grasp this crucial aspect of his thought hitherto, although Origen himself emphasizes the significance of "clarifying the homonyms" (namely discerning and pointing out the different conceptions denoted by one and the same term) and he himself did so quite diligently in interpreting scripture. As the question of the divine reality was treated right from the beginning of this work, namely in chapter 1, what we examine in chapter 4 is Origen's conception of the realities denoted

by the expressions "eternal life" and "eternal death". We argue that unless this distinction of different realities, predicated by one and the same word (namely *eternal*), is made, then Origen's views are bound to be misunderstood. This has happened with a vast number of scholars who make the misleading generalization and speak about a vague notion of "eternity" in Origen.

In treating this question, we give an account of the real existential status in either of these realities and show the radical differences of both Origen's dialectics and conception of the very reality from respective conceptions in Platonism, Neoplatonism and Gnosticism. From these analyses, the spatio-temporal character of Origen's thought emerges and the decisive role of time in the entire world-process becomes apparent too.

The analyses up to this point already show the intense eschatological character of Origen's thought, against opposite allegations of a vast number of scholars mentioned in due course. The very teleological character of time is determined by the fact that the world is directed towards an end. The actual meaning of this end is enquired in chapter 5. We discuss how Origen comprehends the reality *in* the end of time as well as the reality ensuing, so to speak, this end. What is the final destination of what came into being out of non-being out of God's benevolent decision? How will the end be reached and why will time reach an end, in the sense of termination? We discuss these problems into that section, in an enquiry from which the *raison d'être* of time arises; and the final eschatological reality is portrayed to the extent that it is possible.

We assert that what Origen regards as having come into being out of non-being will not pass away. We consider certain views about various kinds of eschatology and make some remarks (though not a full assessment) about the simplistic criteria established in order to

classify and discern what is "Greek" and what is "Hebrew". We argue that Origen's eschatology is beyond such criteria, as his eschatology contains *both* rectification of the world *and* consummation of nature. We finally argue that Origen's conception of time is profoundly determined by a fact which does not exist either in Greek or Hebraic thought, namely the historical fact of the incarnation of Christ and its crucial eschatological implications. And we conclude that the constant eschatological orientation of Origen's thought is vividly present in his conception of time, too.



## Introduction

There is a remarkable difference in how space, on the one hand, and time, on the other, have been treated. In the dawn of Greek philosophy (the dawn of philosophy in general) the Presocratic philosophers regarded the reality of *φύσις* as an unquestionable datum. They sought to discover the permanent principles behind the *φαινόμενα* but no one put the very existence of space proper in question. Thus the Euclidean conception of space encountered virtually no controversy throughout its historical life. In fact this conception of space endured for more than two thousand years.

By contrast, the question of time has received a vast variety of considerations and it has been a matter of controversy since antiquity -a controversy which is still going on. Parmenides' denial that succession is *real*, established the first radical doubt about the very existence of time. This doubt never ceased to tantalize philosophers ever since until our day. This is quite understandable even by common experience. Space constitutes a concrete sensory tangible reality. In spite of the fact that the world is an obviously *temporal* reality, time proper is an evasive conception and meditation upon it demands introspective experience, recollection -in short, it demands abstractions far more elusive than the notion of space does. Space is available to the most immediate experience (or, so it was thought to be), namely *sight* -time appears as a reality apprehended *subsequently* to space. This fact has led to reflection on time through nontemporal features and mainly to the "spatialization of time" -an illustration which was established as a persistent intellectual tradition and is nonetheless responsible for many of the misconceptions of time proper and its nature. This tendency began with the observation of the periodicity of motions of heavenly bodies; it went on with the correlation of time to spatial motion and

eventually time in itself was spatialized and thus altogether eliminated. Quite rightly Bergson, almost a hundred years ago, pointed out that if we try to conceive time as a static geometrical line, we are really thinking of space.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the conceptualization of space and things proved to be far more steadfast than that of time. As the conception of space went virtually unchallenged right through centuries, it provided a sufficient philosophical base, which played a decisive role in the growth of natural sciences. On the other hand, however, the non-commensurate development (or, at least, general acceptance) of a sound philosophical ground and understanding of the nature of time played its part in a non-equivalent development of the understanding of man and society. Great thinkers, especially religious ones, offered their accounts on the nature and meaning of time. The historical failure, however, lies either in the fact that they were neglected, even by those whom they were addressed to, or they were not properly understood. Yet it is primarily the conception of time which profoundly affects a philosophy of history and, in the final analysis, all the aspects and manifestations of human being in its temporal course. The most elementary manifestations of life involve the notion of time. The very notion of *experience* involves the distinction between past, present and future. Even the sense of *to be*, as an individual, as well as the personal opinion about it, is based upon a certain understanding and evaluation of the historical process.

It was not meant to be so, it was not even realized that the problem of time was directed to such a "spatialized" way of apprehension, yet the fact is that this evolution persisted since Parmenides and Zeno until the twentieth century. Certainly it was not accidental. For no philosopher devoted his reflection to the question of time exclusively -this was just a part of his conception of reality as a whole. Hence, how time was viewed became an infallible indicator of

fundamental orientations of a philosophy. For such a view is not just an accidental by-product of a physical or metaphysical system or doctrine proposed by a philosopher or by a school of thought. On the contrary, it is an essential part, an expressive manifestation of the gist of a perception of reality as a whole and of the attitude towards this reality.

This is the reason, because of which it is reasonable to expect that a certain conception of time can suggest significant conclusions about an overall philosophical attitude respective to this. As the concept of time is a pivotal one into a general existential attitude, such a study may further enlighten other facets of a philosophy. Crucial conceptions, such as cosmological, anthropological, eschatological, the attitude to death, moral ideas -all are directly involved and interwoven with how time is perceived and what its meaning is felt (if not consciously *known*) to be. For, in fact, the notion of time constitutes the spine of an entire philosophy and it thoroughly imbues all the premises of an existential attitude.

Hence, how thinkers conceive of time as well as the manner in which they portray their perception of it, stands in agreement with their overall conception of reality. The concept of time is of necessity in harmony with their fundamental philosophical premises, their conception of being as a whole as well as with their methods and dialectics of investigation of philosophical problems.

In view of this fact, the attitude of thinkers towards the notion of time is highly indicative of their general philosophical orientation. For it is not only their general philosophical tendency that determines the conception of time. But also, a certain view of time plays a decisive role in the formation of a general philosophical stance. Thus the very conception of time brings one to the core of a philosopher's ideas. How to live, what, if any, is the purpose of individual existence, how to face death, what might constitute the content of a possible hope, are notions

bound with time; how, if at all, God is conceived of; the perception of the world, its purpose, if any; whether or not the world was created and all the temporal implications that the notion of creation entails, are bound with the very conception of time, too. This close connexion of one's general view of reality to his conception of time decisively forms his ideas of the future, namely his expectations and the overall visualization of things in the time to come. For it is mainly the concern for the future that affects an existential attitude. For example, no one feels fear in thinking that he did not exist *before* he was born -on the contrary, this thought rather brings about a feeling of unexplainable safety. But the awe at the idea of *future* non-existence is not unusual. In fact such a horror is only one facet of the fear of death.

Beyond these general considerations, however, there are special reasons which render the study Origen's conception of time necessary. For the Alexandrian's thought has been a point of intense, and frequently tempestuous, controversy,<sup>2</sup> a controversy since the fourth century until our day. We may, therefore, expect that a definition and elucidation of his conception of time may provide clarifications, as well as elimination of miscomprehensions, of other crucial facets of his highly controversial theology<sup>3</sup> -especially with respect to his cosmology and eschatology.

The criticism directed against Origen varies. The best case is to regard him as the thinker who brought closely together Greek thought and the emerging religion of Christianity.<sup>4</sup> A midway stance is the assertion that he was restricted by the church tradition and the bible -but only to the extent that they did not contradict his own ideas.<sup>5</sup> A more extreme opinion is that Origen was but a Platonist who did nothing more than articulating a mingling of Platonic and Plotinian thought in biblical terms.<sup>6</sup> At any rate, the criticism is that he was responsible for a "Hellenization" of Christianity. In this context he is considered as a

kind of Christian "Gnostic", in as much as Gnosticism is regarded as an "extreme hellenization" of Christianity.

To deal with this question in general is beyond our scope, since our purpose here is to ponder upon Origen's conception of time. However, this criticism, in its various degrees of moderation or extremity, will be extensively discussed in as much as it is related to aspects of his thought pertaining to his view of time.

The birthplace of Origen, Alexandria, was where a number of different streams of thought were converging. Greek-Hellenistic schools, Hebrews, Christians and exponents of various oriental cults encountered each other -all these at a time when the Roman Empire was in a most powerful period of its history. Controversies, disputes, syncretism, eclecticism, allowed the flourishing of schools of thought such as the Judaeo-Hellenistic thought and Gnosticism in a Christian garment.

Origen found himself in the midst of this variety of religious, philosophical and existential attitudes. What is quite significant at this stage, however, is to consider this famous "Greek" background which allegedly has profoundly influenced him to a degree which was regarded as an unforgiveable deviation from the Christian orthodoxy. We should therefore make a survey of the various conceptions of time. Following this, one might be able to judge whether Origen formed his conception of time under the influence of or in contrast to his surroundings. Such a survey becomes much more necessary in view of the fact that Origen's works show that he was well aware of the various streams of thought converging in Alexandria. Despite the controversy surrounding him, his erudition has never been put in question. On the contrary, this has quite often been regarded as his crime, as it sustained that this was the cause for him to "hellenize" Christianity.

Taking the "hellenic" background first, it should be noted that it is a favorite generalization of scholars to speak of "Greek" conception of

time as if there was only one view of it. The fact is, however, that there were serious differences and nonetheless intense controversy among the various Greek philosophical schools. At this point we shall examine what constitutes the "Greek tradition" as regards the question of time.

In spite of erroneous allegations about the contrary,<sup>7</sup> the Greeks did employ time, *too*, as a frame for their thought-form. Already in the seventh century BC, Hesiod articulated in form of poetry the myth of five races of men: The first, the golden race, lived in the original blessed age in which earth of itself produced rich harvests and men were as gods. Then followed the silver race, the copper race, the race of Heroes and the iron race.<sup>8</sup> Through such a mystic and mythological manner, using the medium of allegoric or metaphoric imagery, many ancient Greeks provided their accounts of the question of time, expressed in terms of problems of beginning, becoming, enduring and ceasing.<sup>9</sup> The Presocratic philosophers, too, touched upon the problem of time in that unique poetic-philosophical way in which they articulated their conception of reality. Anaximander,<sup>10</sup> Anaximenes,<sup>11</sup> Heracletus of Ephesus,<sup>12</sup> Anaxagoras,<sup>13</sup> Empedocles,<sup>14</sup> deal with problems in which the question of time is a central one; cyclic destructions, regenerations, infinity of (successive or co-existing) worlds, world-periods, etc. The Pythagoreans made a serious attempt to deal with the question of time as such. Stobaeus<sup>15</sup> adduces the testimony that Philolaus deals with the beginninglessness and endlessness of the universe and Aristotle provides information about the views of Pythagorean Alcmaeon<sup>16</sup> as well as of the Pythagorean Paron<sup>17</sup> on time, which they consider as infinite; they point out that "before" and "after" make sense only in time, whereas eternity is a timeless perpetual "now".

Plato's views of time have enjoyed a special interest, especially because of the mythological (and, thus, ambiguous) character in which he

deliberately articulated his views, as well as because of the special attention Christian theologians paid to his assertions on the question.

To Plato, time proper, is something continuous and thus beyond the possibility of conceptual definition. To speak about "moment" is but a product of abstract reasoning; "moment" in itself is not actually time and it does not really exist;<sup>18</sup> for if it existed, time would become static and the content of time would include the possibility of rest without motion and change. Time is not an aggregate of static "nows" and is inherently related to change and motion. There can be no motion without time.<sup>19</sup> Thus time -motion -change are so closely connected that they cannot be understood independently from each other. This means that there is no time without motion and change; subsequently, whatever is temporal is subject to motion and change. Plato rejects the possibility of human comprehension of notions such as "beginning" or "end" of time.<sup>20</sup> Even the fact that God created time cannot be fully grasped but one can only have a vague idea of such a notion<sup>21</sup> -albeit he definitely repudiates the notion that time is without beginning. Aristotle singles Plato out stating that, with the exception of Plato, all philosophers are in agreement that time is uncreated.<sup>22</sup> But this "creation" means nothing more than that time appeared with the order which was set on the pre-existing "original matter". For Plato, in tune with the general tradition of his day, rejects the idea of creation out of nothing. This should be regarded as a question needing some further discussion since it is Plato who, elsewhere, speaks of the "countless ages of the past".<sup>23</sup> Besides, he holds that Being and action, namely the true existence and its creative act, being and function, are synonymous.<sup>24</sup> God's perfection always compels him to act<sup>25</sup> and he cannot be conceived of as being in the timeless eternity without exercising his creative ability. So it is beyond human comprehensive ability to conceive what God did "before" he created the universe -if such a question can make sense. For it is not

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absolutely clear if Plato actually held a temporal beginning of the world.<sup>26</sup>

Even though, he denied the existence of time in the original chaos, since time is denied to the irregular and, therefore, to the irrational motion of the chaos.<sup>27</sup> At any rate, he articulates the time's coming into being in the celebrated passage in *Timaeus*:

"... when God the Father and creator saw the creature ... the created image ... He rejoiced ... and determined to make a copy ... like the original ... But to bestow the attribute (of the eternal) in its fullness upon a creature was impossible. Wherefore he resolved to have a moving image of eternity. And when he set in order the heavens, he made this image eternal but moving according to number, while eternity itself rests in unity. And this image we call time."<sup>28</sup> "Time, then, and the heavens came into being at the same instant in order that, having being created together, if there was ever to be a dissolution of them, they might be dissolved together. It (sc. time) was framed after the pattern of the eternal nature, in order that it might resemble this as much as possible. For the pattern exists from eternity, and the created heaven has been, is, and will be, in all time. Such was the mind and thought of God when he created time."<sup>29</sup>

Aristotle treated the problem of time facing a vast extent of questions which are related to it.<sup>30</sup> At the outset he states that time could not be without change or motion<sup>31</sup> because it is only through the different stages of motion or change within our mind that we are able to conceive of time.<sup>32</sup> Although "fast" and "slow" are defined by time, time proper is something constant, because time is not defined by time.<sup>33</sup> Hence although time is something related to motion or change<sup>34</sup> is in itself is something fundamentally different from motion and change proper.<sup>35</sup>

Thus time is a number or measure of motion (κινήσεως ἀριθμός)<sup>36</sup>



as well as the "number" (ἀριθμός) of motion with respect to our distinction between the "before" and the "after".<sup>37</sup> As "everything that moves is in time"<sup>38</sup> and it is time which marks motion<sup>39</sup> "time is what is counted and not that with which we count".<sup>40</sup>

Hence, to Aristotle time is but a number; therefore to be "in time" means that something is counted or measured by time.<sup>41</sup> Time in itself is continuous since it is an attribute of what is continuous, namely the number of motion<sup>42</sup> -it is a single, infinite and uniform "continuum".<sup>43</sup>

Time is uncreated and it is infinite both in respect of its divisibility and its extremities.<sup>44</sup> Thus time has a uniformity of nature and "continues through its entire duration inalienably and without modification";<sup>45</sup> it is always what it is, it is not "in" time and it is not contained by time or measured by time or affected by time.<sup>46</sup> Time is the everlasting duration itself.

Of the immediate disciples of Plato it was Haestiaeus of Perinthus (of the so-called old Academy) who fully abided by his master's allegorical definition of time and avers that "time is the course of the heavenly bodies in their relation to one another".<sup>47</sup> Speusippus, however, seems to follow Aristotle as he defines time "the quantity within motion" (τό ἐν κινήσει ποσόν).<sup>48</sup> Accordingly, Xenocrates defines time as "the measure of what has been created as well as everlasting motion" (μέτρον τῶν γεννητῶν καὶ κίνησιν αἰδίου)<sup>49</sup> which maintains the Platonic definition of time as "motion" but also is in line with the Aristotelian view of time as "number".

On the other hand, the followers of Aristotle, the Peripatetics, did abide by their master's definition of time<sup>50</sup> -perhaps because it was not allegorical, more concrete and had a scientific character not susceptible of much controversy and different interpretations, as happened with Plato's views. Thus Theophrastus defends the notion of a universe without beginning or end and similar views were exposed by Eudemus of

Rhodes and Dicaearchus of Messina. It was Strato of Lampsacus, however, who expounded his own views of time in a special treatise challenging the Aristotelian definition of time in terms of number or motion as unsatisfactory if not erroneous. He defines time as "the quantity in all action" (τό ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι ποσόν)<sup>51</sup> and "the quantity of everything that is in motion and at rest" (τό ἐν κινήσει καί ηρεμίας ποσόν)<sup>52</sup> and "μέτρον κινήσεως καί μονής".<sup>53</sup>

This notion of "rest" is particularly interesting as it was on this that Plotinus grounded his arguments against the connexion of time with motion.

As regards the Stoic definition of time, their fundamental notion is that time is an "extension" (διάστημα). This definition of time has enjoyed little attention. It has also been inadequately comprehended. Some, like J. Rist,<sup>54</sup> appear uncertain as to whether the Stoic definition of time should be regarded nearer to that of Plato's or Aristotle's. A. Chroust thinks that he needs but an extremely short discussion in order to conclude that the Stoic definition of time actually was but an echo of the Aristotelian one.<sup>55</sup>

The Stoic views on the question are to play a significant part in our exposition of Origen's conception of time and will be discussed in chapter 2 together with Origen's own views. At this point, however, we need to make clear that the Stoic conception of time was a *third* one and quite independent from that of either Plato's or Aristotle's.

What Zeno held about time can be found in a passage which reads as follows: "And Zeno has said that time is an extension of motion (κινήσεως διάστημα) and the criterion of fastness and slowness. And it is in time (κατά τούτον) that events occur and everything that becomes and all beings are."<sup>56</sup> Also, in another passage it is stated that "...from the Stoics, Zeno (i.e. says) that time is merely the extension of every motion." (πάσης ἀπλῶς κινήσεως διάστημα).<sup>57</sup>

Chryssippus defines time as the "extension of the motion of the world".<sup>58</sup> This is certainly a more specific definition of time, compared to that of Zeno's. However we do not see why this view of Chryssippus should be considered as introducing an essential modification of Zeno's view.<sup>59</sup> For Zeno's original conception of time as an "extension" remains here unchangeable and it is the core of Chryssippus' conception of time, too. Besides, there is at least one passage where Chryssippus' view is cited in disjunction or as an explanatory one to that of Zeno's: "And Chryssippus [says] that time is the extension of motion (κινήσεως διάστημα) and this is why it sometimes is said to be the measure of fastness or slowness; or [time] is the extension which closely attends the motion of the world and [it is said that] it is in time that everything is moving as well as being".<sup>60</sup>

J.M.Rist considers that this definition in terms of its letter may be nearer to Aristotle (who defined time as the measure or number of motion) but it is not impossible that the spirit of this definition be more related to that of Plato (who considered time as the moving image of eternity).<sup>61</sup>

We, however, do not see why the Stoic conception and definition of time should by all means be regarded as related either to that of Aristotle's or of Plato's. What we assert is that Zeno's conception is clearly a third view, at least in this respect: Platonic definition of time is undoubtedly a metaphysical as well as a theological one, while that of Aristotle's is a scientific and mathematical one. Zeno, however, neither regards time as something related to metaphysics in any way (for he was a materialist Stoic) nor does he consider time as an intellectual mathematical perception, namely as a "number". Although he avers that time may be "*and* a criterion of fastness and slowness" he is clear in fundamentally considering time as an *extension*. Thus he associates time with a natural reality (namely, motion) regarding time as a natural

reality, too, namely as a sort of extension which is indispensable for motion to take place and to make sense. In his view, therefore, time is in neither an "image" of a metaphysical reality, nor is it a mathematical conception, namely "number". Time is a sort of natural "extension".

The Platonic definition of time is grounded on a fundamental premise, namely the notion of *transcendence*. Whatever the interpretation of *Timaeus* at this point may be, there is one fact which cannot be disputed: The main point which Plato wished to make in his definition of time is the *similarity* of time to eternity -which, in the final analysis, implies the *dependence* of the temporal to the eternal, the dependence of the image to the archetype. If Plato's views on the question of "beginning" of the universe are somewhat vague and surrounded by controversy, it is because he directed his main attention not to the problem of "beginning", but to the point that the cosmos is originated and dependent on an absolute and supreme *transcendent cause*. This is the main point expressed through the allegorical statements in *Timaeus*. If one would discern some contradictions in the statements of Plato concerning the notion of "beginning",<sup>62</sup> this is due to Plato's main concern not with the notion of "beginning" but with that of dependence of the world on an supreme absolute *transcendent cause*.

This whole background and dialectics are totally alien to the Stoic thought. For to them no notion of transcendence makes any sense and they firmly stick to the materiality of the world which is regarded as the "whole" (τὸ ὅλον)<sup>63</sup> -with nothing existing beyond the world. So the spirit of the Stoic definition of time can have nothing in common with the views of Plato on time.

On the other hand, the seeming similarity of of the Stoic definition to the Aristotelian one does not actually suggest any affinity between them at all.

When Aristotle defines time as a "number" or "measure" of motion,

it follows that time could not exist as a "number" if there were no soul at all. On this point Aristotle is quite explicit. If there is no one to count, then there can be nothing to be counted -thus there could be no "number".<sup>64</sup> For it is only soul which is qualified to count. Without soul there is only motion -and if there is only motion without any possibility of "counting", then his definition actually falls. In Aristotle's definition of time there are two fundamental premises: First, the motion or change; secondly, the soul, who is the counting agent and renders a meaning upon "number". Thus this definition of time stands only if there are those two presuppositions, namely the moving (or changing) object and the counting intelligent subject. In fact, as Aristotle held the everlastingness of the world, this point raised no problems to his theory of time.<sup>65</sup>

In Aristotle, therefore, what is of absolute ontological priority with respect to time is *motion*. By contrast, for the Stoics the main ontological predicate of time is *extension*. Time would be regarded *also* as a "measure", but this is just an additional property of time. This means that if time is not regarded as a "measure" and if there is no one to "count" it, the Stoic definition of time does not fall -as it happens with the Aristotelian one. What stands in the background of this substantial difference is the Stoic doctrine of cosmic periods.

The Stoics, as well as Aristotle, held that time is *one* and it is a *continuum*. If the Stoics held time proper to be fundamentally defined as "number" then the end of each cosmic period could mean the end of time and the beginning of *another* time. This is clearly rejected by them. For they all, especially Chrysippus, are quite explicit that each new world begins and ends with a cosmic catastrophe, but time does not.<sup>66</sup>

Time is *one*, it is without beginning and indeed is a continuum infinite in both directions. If time proper was defined as the number of the wordly (and thus: orderly, since there can be no number of motion in

disorder) motion, this could entail that this world is without beginning or end -an idea held by Aristotle but totally unacceptable to the Stoics. Besides, in a general conflagration there are not souls to "count" motion -and yet time does exist and his continuity is maintained, too.

This analysis means that if the Stoics accepted the Aristotelian definition of time, then fundamental pressuppositions of their philosophy (like that of the cosmic periods) would have no adequate ground. In short, the Aristotelian definition of time is essentially incompatible with fundamental Stoic doctrines. This is why time is in principle defined as an *extension* -a definition which can defy Aristotle's denial of successive worlds and it does not necessarily presuppose an intelligent subject to "count" time. To the Stoics, time may be regarded as a "measure" not because time itself is a "number", but because motion takes place *in* time, namely in the *extension* which in itself is time proper. For it is not number, but *extension* what constitutes the fundamental ontological definition of time proper. Thus the occurrence of a cosmic catastrophe, which marks the end of a world and the beginning of the next, and the subsequent absence of an orderly motion, as well as of an intelligent subject capable of counting motion, does not put the Stoic definition of time in any question whatsoever. And this happens due to the fact that the Stoic definition of time is radically different from that of Aristotle's.

Hence, it is clear that the Stoic view of time, with respect to these of Plato's and Aristotle's, is a *third* definition of time which is quite independent from either the Platonic or the Aristotelian one. Later it was Proclus who pointed out that the Stoic view is actually different from the views of time of either of Plato or of the Peripatetics.<sup>67</sup>

There is, therefore, a Stoic tradition on the conception of time (namely, on the particular question of *what is* time proper) which stands beside the Platonic and Aristotelian views, being independent

from them.

As regards the Epicurean attitude to the problem of time we shall only shortly state that they generally were influenced by the Aristotelian view of it. They regarded time as a "symptom accompanying things in motion" (σύμπτωμα τούτο δ' ἐστὶ παρακοιούθημα κινήσεων),<sup>68</sup> namely it is a concomitant of motion. In view of Origen's disdain for Epicurean thought and attitude, there is no need to discuss this question further.

Approaching the second and first centuries BC it was a general symptom of the era to seek refuge to eclectism, mainly from Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics. This happened with the question of time, too. Thus in thinkers such as Carneades (of the Middle Academy), Panaetius and Posidonius, there is an apparent eclecticism and syncretism on the question of time. On the other hand, Sextus Empiricus develops a whole series of arguments in order to prove the unreality (ἀνυπόστατος) of time.<sup>69</sup> Finally, Marcus Aurelius did not regard time as a "scientific" but as a moral problem, as we discuss in chapter 2. It was the era when the historical period of scientific inspiration and offer had run out, and the main human desire was not for *knowledge* but for *salvation*.<sup>70</sup>

In fact, the Gnostic attitude towards time is inspired not by the desire to acquire a scientific knowledge of it, but to be "emancipated" from it. According to their overall hostile attitude towards the world, which they regarded as evil, they seek salvation not *in* time but *from* time. Regarding the being-in-the-world as a "fallen state" from an original state of freedom, their attitude to time is inspired by the nostalgia of a lost freedom. They detest time, they seek to shatter it because it is a means for their being in slavery and servitude.<sup>71</sup> So their tendency is to annul it and to deny it as a "lie" or, at least, to surpass it. The Gnostic mind is trying to escape the worldly reality through a mythological thought. In this thought, atemporality and temporality are

mingled together, as the Gnostic tries to achieve a personal "resurrection" and "perfection" not through a process in time but rather through a mystic experience.

Our reference to the Plotinus' conception of time will be brief, mainly for two reasons: First, Plotinus was twenty years younger than Origen; so one could hardly say that the former's views constitute a background for the latter. Such an assertion would be made only in the event that Plotinus' views were current or anticipated before him and all he did was to systematize them in the *Enneads*. But there is nothing which would put Plotinus' originality (within the context of his Platonism, of course) in question whatsoever. Secondly, we shall refer to certain aspects of Plotinus' view of time in chapter 2, in order to compare the Neoplatonic thought to that of Origen's and to show how radical were the transformations which Origen made in order to establish a Christian view of time.

Hence, at this point, we shall make only a brief reference to Plotinus' view of time. In fact Plotinus exercised a severe criticism against both Aristotle and the Stoics. He rejected the definition of time as a "number", and the Stoic definition of time as "extension" seemed to him as not to be touching the problem of time proper. His argument was that one would never find *what* time proper is by counting it. On the other hand, the Stoic assertion that time is an extension seemed to him as a tautology, as time was defined by a predicate (namely διάστημα) which was not defined in itself. To him time is ontologically defined a *life* -the life of the Soul in the motion by which it changes from one phase of life to another.<sup>72</sup> So time, as well as the motions of the physical world, are defined in terms of the life and the motions within the Soul as such. The Soul partakes both of the spiritual world and of the material world<sup>73</sup> and it is itself that produces both time and the physical world. Thus all physical motion is "in time", but the motions



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(namely the life) of the Soul itself are not in time.<sup>74</sup> Time originates through the desire of the Soul to translate into physical reality what it had visualized in the purely spiritual world.<sup>75</sup> So the Soul generates time within itself as an image of eternity primarily for itself, but subsequently for the physical world as such.<sup>76</sup> Thus the Platonic notion of time as an "image" is maintained; the notion that time "moves" is maintained in a sense; for time is regarded as "a state of the Soul consisting of alternating motions from one sphere of life to another".<sup>77</sup> To Plotinus, however, the main ontological definition of time is that time in itself is *life*.

Besides this tradition of the various Greek conceptions of time, there was the biblical view of it. Whether a certain Hebraic conception of time actually existed or not is a moot question on which we make some suggestions in chapters 4 and 5. What is definite is that the Hebrews have never dealt with the problem of time proper and there are no works devoted to the discussion of this question. What existed was the intense orientation towards the future and the expectation of the fulfilment of the divine promises as stated in the Old Testament.

Christianity, being primarily a religion of salvation<sup>78</sup> establishes a mode of thought according to which the prime concern is directed towards future -the infinite future time. This existential attitude is found throughout the Bible after the meaning it acquired with the New Testament. However, the question of time proper was not treated in a way that one would speak of a "tradition" which reached Origen with respect to this particular point. The exception was Tatian who proposed that time itself is static and does not move nor change; all the notions about a temporal flux are but a subjective impression which is based on the deception that it is time that moves. What he suggests is that it is not time that moves, but human beings who move through time. The feeling that time moves, which produces the notions of temporal motion

of change, is a fallacious imagery similar to that of those who are sailing on a ship and think that it is the landscape that moves and not them.<sup>79</sup>

This statement of Tatian, however, by no means could be regarded as suggesting any elaborated view of time. In fact this statement is all he had to say on the question of time in his vituperative work "Against the Greeks"; a work in which he tries to touch upon all philosophers, all persons (mythological or not) and all questions which the Greeks dealt with in one way or another. No one then would expect that in such a work any serious account of any philosophical problem would be offered. At any rate, what Tatian makes in this passage (which, we repeat, constitutes his only reference to the question of time) is to postulate a reversed view, namely that it is human beings and not time that "move" -namely he avers the notion of "static time". But this is too a generalistic (if not simplistic) view to be regarded as a serious treatment of time. Certainly it is un-Platonic, but it is not an un-Greek one. For Aristotle as well as the Stoics would promptly endorse the principle that time itself does not "move". On the other hand, the psychological division "past-present-future" cannot be denied whatsoever. On this, all Tatian seems to say is that the distinction into past, present and future is but a subjective illusion.<sup>80</sup>

This view brings him closely enough to the Aristotelian Alexander of Aphrodisias (fl. c. A.D.205) who held that the "generation" of what is called "instant" "is in the mind".<sup>81</sup>

It is obvious, therefore, that there was a variety of conceptions of time which surrounded Origen in his era. There is no such a universal thing called "Greek" conception of time as it has been simplistically (yet widely) asserted. From the mythological temporal articulations of the Presocratic period, to the -essentially theological- Platonic conception, through the purely scientific Aristotelian and "objectivistic" Stoic

views, until the mystic Plotinian one (not to mention the eclectics or the Scepticism) there was a great variety of Greek perceptions of time that converged in Alexandria. Beside them, the Gnostic view of time, the Jewish thought and syncretism in all possible combinations, constituted a spiritual environment, knowledge of which was an aspect of the erudition of the time. And Origen was a man of great erudition.

But was it a matter of "knowledge"? This is the crucial question which brings to the core of Origen's presuppositions towards a formation of a conception of time. In order to answer this question it will be of utmost significance to consider not only the evolution of a particular philosophical notion (be it *time* or whatever) but to take into account the profound changes which were taking place at the time.

As a matter of fact, the epoch in which Origen was born (185 A.D.) is a period in which radical transformations were taking place. It was not a question of employing this or that philosophical opinion. It was something more thorough, more urgent, more dramatical: A profound, and nonetheless painful, *change of existential attitude* is the main characteristic of the era.

The major fact was that the more people were coming in contact with the various philosophical systems, the more they realized that philosophy was unable to fulfil its own self-imposed task; that is, to offer people the deeper knowledge of truth, through which they would reach virtue and bliss. Scientific knowledge (already largely undermined by Scepticism) did not believe any more that it possessed the truth. In the various Stoic assemblies there was an idea which was constantly gaining currency: They realized and admitted that it was impossible for any human being to materialize their ideal of the wise man -which had so clearly and consistently been portrayed by them. From all directions, in all streams of thought, it was becoming evident that a human being cannot *know* the reality of things through his own power; subsequently,

no man could become virtuous and happy if he relied exclusively on his own power. People were living under a Roman empire in which the social inequalities were an everyday experience; they were seeing all the goods of earth around them -and yet not belonging to them. So there was an increasing change of interest from this world towards a better one. After the elapse of many centuries, people found themselves again filled with a passionate desire for the supernatural, a hunger for religion, a profound need for the *salvation of soul* rather than mere *knowledge* of its confirmed impasses.<sup>82</sup> Hence, civilization, which had already given its fruits of Art and Science and exhausted itself, was turning to Religion again. The Platonic search for the reality of things in a super-natural world, the Aristotelian monotheism, the Stoics ethics -all were elements of a past still echoing as people were orienting themselves towards *redemption* beyond the sensible world; a redemption that would be reached not through a process of intellectual activity but through a *revelation* offered to people in one way or another.

So the requirements of science and life converged. Science sought to find in religion the solution of the problems which had been tantalizing it for so long a time; life, on the other hand, was seeking to base the hunger for religion, or religious faith, on a scientific foundation or form.

Alexandria was the center of this radical historical procedure and transformation of the entire civilization, as outlined above. In the Library (Museum) of this cosmopolitan commercial capital city were treasured the fruits of the Greek erudition; and people from every tribe and origin were gathered in that city, in order to find answers not to scientific questions any more, but to the feelings and existential requirements which were overwhelmingly pressing them.

Such was the environment in which early Christianity was

developing. It has been suggested that the Christianity built the system of its own doctrines by coming to terms with the old philosophy.<sup>83</sup> Origen found himself in a period in which history of philosophy was increasingly interwoven with history of dogma. The relationship between Christianity and philosophy had been opened up by the Apologists. This phenomenon was to continue for a very long time.

Hence the task facing Origen was not to articulate a theory of time and add one more opinion in the long series of scientific or philosophical tradition which reached him. It was the urgent need of the period to *form* rather than to explicate a view of time, which should be in tune with the Christian perception of the world and would serve the articulation of the new religion. For there were special reasons which rendered this demand particularly urgent.

The new religion was founded on the events related to the historical life of Jesus. The revelation did not come from the mystical experiences of some master who was regarded as a chosen vessel of God; but it was based on concrete historical occurrences. It was a task of a Christian thinkers to elucidate the significance of these occurrences. Hence the problem of *philosophy of history* comes to the fore as one of prime importance. Whereas the Presocratic religious question had been treated mainly in terms of the stable essence behind the phenomena, the stability behind the *φύσις*, with Christianity it is the problem of *the world in time* that becomes of main priority. This does not mean that earlier schools of thought did not seek a purpose in terms of time. Plato did reflect on the ultimate goal of the earthly life; Aristotle did research on the teleological casual sequence according to which civil life was formed; and the Stoics as well as Cicero did visualize a world-state based on reason as a goal which human race ought to fulfil. But what was entirely new was the question of an overall *meaning* of human history - a meaning originated in a "plan" or, as it was expressed,

in an *oikonomia*, the *oikonomia* of God already manifested and realized in the person of Jesus.

So Christianity was grounded on the conviction that the advent of Jesus constitute the pivotal point of world history as well as a turning point in a process towards salvation. The sense of victory stemmed from the belief that, in the person of Jesus, the first and decisive victory against evil had already been won. What remained was this victory to be realized for the entirety of the world in the future.

This is the fundamental perception on which a Christian conception of time should be formed and expressed. The question in the old philosophy about what is Being and Becoming, was not so much expressed in terms of "essence" of φύσις behind the phenomena as contrasted to phenomena themselves. It was now clear that Being is God whereas Becoming is a meaningful *process* in time, in which divine and creaturely will encounter each other. God manifests his will and man is free to obey or to disobey, being responsible for his action. All this interrelation, however, was seen in the context of a teleological process, namely a course towards a goal, an *end*, visualized in the light of the personal history of Jesus and his promise to his disciples about the eschatological expectation.

Our scope in this work will be to enquire in Origen's conception of time in itself as well as to see whether or not he attributes to time an intrinsic meaning; and, if the answer to this question is positive, to see what actually constitutes the intrinsic meaning of his conception of time.

We shall argue that the conception of time is present in the entire theology of Origen as a fundamental element which has been formed in full accordance with his general conception of the world from a Christian point of view. In fact, the conception of time reflects the entirety of his theological views and profoundly imbues them. Thus,

although it has not been our purpose to expound the whole of Origen's theology, we have regarded the study of all the aspects of his theology as an indispensable presupposition for the understanding and exposition of this crucial facet of his thought, namely his conception of time. For, as we already emphasized, how a thinker conceives time is actually a very expressive manifestation of his entire thought. The conception of time stands in close relation to one's entire way of perceiving the whole of reality, in natural, philosophical and theological terms. Hence, how a thinker comprehends time cannot be positively determined unless every aspect of his thought has been thoroughly studied. For the notion of time both *determines* and *is determined* by all facets of a certain philosophy or theology or attitude to life in general.

Hence, the scientific benefit out of the study of Origen's conception of time lies in the fact that this may elucidate other crucial aspects or particular points of his thought. As a matter of fact, we shall argue that his conception of time is the decisive means through which long-standing misconceptions of his thought are eliminated,

In studying Origen's thought we have followed certain principles drawn from the experience of how his work has been approached or treated hitherto:

A large part of Origen's works has been preserved in the Greek original text; another is extant only in Latin versions; there are also extensive parts of his writings preserved both in the Greek original as well as in Latin translation. It is generally accepted that Latin versions must be read with caution -not only because Rufinus has no hesitation to explicate that he has taken some liberties in rendering Origen's thought; but also because a comparison of Greek original texts to their respective in Latin show that the differences are not always just linguistic but they are essential. It is not only a question of Rufinus' being rather talkative, in his effort to do what he thought to be an

"interpretation" rather than mere translation of Origen's work, in order to avoid misunderstandings or in his effort to comply with what was regarded as "orthodoxy" at his time. The most crucial point is that Rufinus himself had not comprehended pivotal facets of Origen's thought, such as his conception of time and his eschatology.

The Latin rendering of *De Principiis* is an outstanding monument of this fact. It is most regrettable that, although it is declared that it is but a free rendering, the vast majority of scholars have spelled out opinions about Origen's thought based on this text. As regards the conception of time, when a student of Origen's thought approaches the Latin version of this work intending to study the question of time, he is struck by a characteristic fact: Whenever there are references crucially involving the concept of time (such as God himself with respect to time or the relation of the persons of Trinity between themselves or God's relation to the world) there seems to be an unawareness of the momentous significance of the question of time in the treatment of those questions. Terms such as "before", "after", "earlier", "later", "younger", "older", applied to the forenamed subjects, seem to be used without any consciousness of their cruciality. For example, one meets passages like this: "...to prevent anyone from thinking that the title of Almighty belonged to God *before* the birth of wisdom, through which he is called Father;..." or: "...the title of Almighty cannot be *older* in God than that of Father, for it is through the Son that the Father is Almighty...".<sup>84</sup> It is obvious that the terms "before" and "older" are implying a kind of temporal sequence or temporal priority. Further, one meets expressions such as; "the world ... began to exist *at a definite time*",<sup>85</sup> God did not exist "even *for a single moment*" without begetting his wisdom,<sup>86</sup> there is also reference of "certain ages or periods of time ... during which world" might not exist in order to reject that there were "ages or periods" when God was not almighty and a "time when he began



to have creatures",<sup>87</sup> that "wisdom is *everlasting*",<sup>88</sup> and there is reference to whether "there will ever be a time when there will be no world anywhere, or if there ever was a time when there was no world at all".<sup>89</sup>

Expressions of this sort imply that time itself is regarded as something taken for granted -in fact they suggest that time is not *considered* at all. This simplistic way in which the question of time appears in the Latin rendering of *Princ* just indicates that time is applied to God quite carelessly, without any previous serious analysis of the whole question. The same happens with the notion of eternity. It is stated that "the term *everlasting or eternal* properly denotes this which had no beginning of existence and can never cease to be what it is ... His wisdom therefore is an *everlasting* brightness *enduring* eternally ...".<sup>90</sup> Although there is the additional definition "yet not in time", the whole phrase indicates that the Son's co-eternity to the Father is understood by placing the Son's birth back to the infinite past.

Passages like these seem to indicate that temporal notions are treated with a complete unawareness of their crucial implications, even when they are attributed to the divine being. It is not difficult to find quite a number of similar passages in the *Princ*, namely, passages where temporal terms are used in a awkward manner. Indeed the frequency of those terms is quite remarkable, particularly for someone who approaches this work with the intention to study the concept of time there.

It would be then not unexpected if someone concluded that Origen considers time as an unquestionable datum attributed to God's life, too. We intend, however, to show that such an assertion can be, to a certain extent, justified and grounded only in the event that the study of Origen's thought is confined to the Latin rendering of the *Princ*. Expressions such as "yet not in time" are actually Origen's ones; yet they

are almost lost and neglected into the flood of Rufinu's arbitrary and careless use of inappropriate temporal notions.

Even so Rufinus could not help not translating one or two passages where God's transcendence in respect of time is clearly stated.<sup>91</sup> It is true that in view of the length and the importance of a work such as the *Princ*, the point where God's transcendence to time is explicated would by rather untrustworthy -something like a kind of one more interpolation of Rufinus. If the study is confined only to the *Princ*, such a suspicion would be not unjustified. For those statements are too few in a voluminous work of four books, compared to the numerous use of temporal categories in a simplistic way, where time appears to be attributed unquestionably even to the divine life. If there is a mistake, this is not the incredibility which could be attributed to the one or two passages of the *Princ*, which prove that it is not quite the case; the mistake lies simply in the fact that the study of this question has been confined only in this work, as our discussion in this treatise shall show. For the very text of *Princ* contains contradictions which have led to assertions such as that "everything contained in his *De Principiis* has also its antithesis in the same work".<sup>92</sup> Some of these contradictions will be discussed in as much as they are related to our topic. However it will be mainly these points, as contrasted to Origen's consistency throughout his works in Greek, which show the damaging interpolations of Rufinus and the untrustworthiness of Latin renderings of Origen's works.

Hence, a major principle which was constantly followed during this research is that the best way to ground our assertions about Origen's thought is to corroborate them through his works preserved in the Greek original text. It is our view that the unquestionably authentic views of Origen can be found in the original Greek text of his work; Latin version can be taken into account, but with caution. A view of

Origen's in a Latin text should be regarded as absolutely authentic if it can be corroborated by a Greek text as well. This procedure has been proved particularly useful in interpreting properly points in Latin versions.

Subsequently, it is evident that this kind of research presupposes the study of the entirety of Origen's works in Greek. In fact, there has been not a word of this work left out of study. The reason is that since Origen did not compose a special treatise on time but *formed* a conception of time which underlies and imbues decisively his entire theology, it would be unacceptable to overlook any part of his works. Besides, this is a way of expressing in practice our opposition to the currently established practice to express views on Origen's thought on the basis of the study of two or three of his works -not to mention scholars who *Princ* only. It is our view (which will be discussed and proven again and again in this work) that *Princ* should not be regarded as the work which may *interpret* Origen's thought or provide safe conclusions about it. This is rather the work which needs *to be interpreted* in the light of Origen's other texts extant in Greek. Such an interpretation is a task which still waits to be done. In this work, we have taken into account a number of editions of this work: P. Koetschau's edition, the English translation of it, as well the French edition by H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti. Koetschau has quite arbitrarily interpolated texts of authors subsequent to Origen -and all of them hostile to him. This editor has shown an excessive facility in employing any kind of irresponsible (if not malicious) criticism against Origen and incorporating it into the text of *Princ* as "views of Origen" which are allegedly "filling gaps" of the Latin translation of Rufinus. This edition (as well as views of the English translator G.W. Butterworth, who not only promptly accepts Koetschau's tactics but also adds his own contribution to erroneous allegations) is open to severe criticism, which

we did not fail to exercise. This has been done, to a certain extent, with points of the French edition, which contains allegations and miscomprehensions far too serious to be left without comments. In fact, besides our comments throughout our work, we finally were forced to make an Appendix (namely Appendix A) in order reject some views related to our topic and utterly falsely rendered by that edition. But we touched upon this problem only in as much as the points are related to our topic. We leave for the future a more detailed and comprehensive work on a number of erroneous comments accompanying this, relatively recent, edition. At any rate, an edition of the *Princ* elucidated and commented in the light of the *entirety* of Origen's authentic views still waits to be made, especially in the English-speaking world. As regards the *Princ* in general, we have used it only as an ancillary source. For it is a text highly precarious, full of contradictions (due to Rufinus' interpolations) and, at any rate, in itself, it is a source of confusion rather than elucidation of Origen's thought.

As regards other works of Origen, we have reservations about the authenticity of the *Scholia in Apocalypsis*. Not so much because there is from nowhere any testimony that Origen ever wrote any comments in the Apocalypsis,<sup>93</sup> but to any one who is familiar with the style of Origen in the thousands of pages of his work in Greek, this text seems unlikely him and alien to his style as found from his early *commJohn* written in Alexandria in 218 to *Cels* written in Cesarea in 248.<sup>94</sup> We have no reason to make this point one of dispute whatsoever. For, as far as our topic is concerned, of what is stated in that work, there is nothing to appeal to, or to dispute.<sup>95</sup>

There are particular reasons which render the study of Origen's own words particularly useful. He had a very good command of Greek and he is very scrupulous in the use of every word. As regards language, he subjects scriptural passages to close scrutiny, very often appealing to

the etymology of a word. In using a word, he is always profoundly conscious of its grammatical, philosophical and theological implications. In his Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul, he quite often goes as far as to do what he calls *ἀποκαταστήσαι τὴν φράσιν* (to restore the phrase), namely to render the text in correct Greek. That Origen is highly scrupulous in treating language is not just an assumption drawn of the study of his texts. It is himself who explicates the significance of the correct interpretation as well as proper use of Greek language (which he highly respected for its elegance and expressional possibilities)<sup>96</sup> even in its slightest details and nuances. Thus he states:

"And let anyone know that it is impossible to treat properly any problem, be it moral or natural or theological, unless he uses terms with their precise meaning and depicts the logical significations in due way. It is not futile to follow the preciseness of the significations as well as to ponder painstakingly upon them; for there are cases where we commit serious mistakes because of failing to clear up the homonyms (μὴ καθάιροντες τὰς ὁμωνυμίας), the doubts, the misuses of the terms, the literal meanings and the contradistinctions." And he further stresses: "We have said all these, in order to show that we, who wish not to be mistaken in understanding the divine Scriptures, believe that it is utterly necessary to be conscious and aware of the logic of the terms used".<sup>97</sup>

These explicit statements of Origen, as well as how he generally uses and explains the nuances in Greek language, convince that he knows this language in depth; he is perpetually conscious of the fact that the manner in which he treats language should serve the exposition of his views in the most accurate way. Given these statements about the significance of linguistic scrutiny and accuracy, it is reasonable to expect that the study of his works preserved in Greek may provide his authentic theological views in an authoritative way. We also may focus

our analysis on certain crucial terms he uses; for when Origen uses terms, especially those of particular significance, he is fully conscious of their philosophical or theological implications. As our discussions will show, following Origen's own practice towards a thorough study not only of the notions expressed but also of their articulation itself, is a principle of research which provides very significant conclusions.

A subsequent point of great importance is the significance which Origen attributes to the so-called "homonyms". In the passage above he explicates that it is a task "to clear up the homonyms" (καθαίροντες τὰς ὁμωνυμίας). This notion is frequently used throughout his work in order to indicate a term under which there are more than one conceptions to be understood. In the Prologue of the Commentary on the Song of Songs there is an account of the meaning of homonyms: "...the Divine Scriptures make use of homonyms; that is to say, they use identical terms for describing defferent things ... ; and not only are the same terms employed, but the things themselves are compared with one another."<sup>98</sup> This definition is also found in texts in Greek; thus "homonyms are those which have only their name in common, but their essential content is different" (ὁμώνυμα δέ ἐστιν, ὧν ὄνομα μόνον κοινόν, ὁ δέ κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς οὐσίας λόγος ἕτερος).<sup>99</sup>

In interpreting Scripture and exposing his own views, it is an intense and permanent concern of Origen to carry out what he sets forth as a task of the biblical interpreter, namely to "clarify the homonyms". What is most significant, though, is that Origen himself uses homonyms in order to articulate his own conceptions. This fact, although highly significant for the comprehension of his thought, has not been adequately noticed nor has due attention been paid to it. At any rate, it has not been applied as a means to unravel crucial aspects of his theology. In our research, we have regarded it as an indispensable task to clarify the homonyms used by him, namely to determine the various meanings which

are attributed to the same term. Thus pivotal notions of his concept of time, such as *τέλος* (end) or *αἰών* (aeon) or *αἰώνιος* (eternal), *κόσμος* (cosmos), *γνῶσις* (knowledge), *σοφία* (wisdom), *θάνατος* (death), can be elucidated only after they have been apprehended as homonyms. For the term *end*, for example, has no less than four significations (excluding the current meanings of it).<sup>100</sup> Thus "end" may mean the end of a certain cosmic period (which is the beginning of the next); it may allude to an individual rational creature's personal "goal", which may occur in any of the forthcoming aeons; it may also mean the final "subjection" of all rational creatures to Christ, as in I Cor. 15,25-27; or it may mean the absolute end, marked by the "subjection" of Christ to the Father, according to I Cor. 15,28.

Unless the different meanings of a homonym are pointed out and the different realities expressed by the same term are clearly portrayed, Origen's conception of time could not be comprehended. As we shall argue, the confusion and appearing contradictions in *Princ* are due to the failure (both of Rufinus and Origen's critics) to grasp the different realities indicated by the term "end", as well as of other homonyms -such as *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*, *γνῶσις*, etc. In this treatise it will be shown that many of the misconceptions of Origen's authentic views are originated in failure to grasp the utmost significance of homonyms in his thought.

Finally, in discussing Origen's views, we were fully aware of the fact that we are dealing with a thinker whose thought (or *alleged* thought) has been highly and tempestuously controversial for more than seventeen centuries -from shortly after his death until our day. In studying Origen's own words (especially all those in the original text) for years, we came very closely to his outstanding intellectual abilities, his brightness and, nonetheless, his tenderness. The outcome of this study is not just an academical dissertation or whatever we are going to

write about Origen in future. We deem that the study of his thought brings to the student an existential benefit, mainly stemming from his honesty of thought and the quality of his life itself. May we regard this as a personal benefit which is most important and far superior to any intellectual benefit out of a long and intense study of Origen's thought.

On the other hand, however, it was not without frustration that we have studied a vast number of works about Origen's thought. It is not just a question of distortions or miscomprehensions -already since the era of Jerome, later Justinian, until as late as 1986. But there still are allegations which come to direct contrast to what Origen really held and explicitly stated. There are assertions which are supposed to be an "answer" to Origen - and yet they are nothing more than a mere repetition of Origen's own words.<sup>101</sup> And there are citations of Origen's works, which are adduced in order to prove exactly the opposite of what the passages themselves show -and they would *show* the real views of Origen if they were *quoted* and not just cited as references. Maybe it is the barrier of the language, maybe it is because the study was not extended over the whole of Origen's work, or because the references are considered out of context.<sup>102</sup> -whatever the case may be the fact does not change. For if a passage of Origen's is extant, it is unacceptable to be adduced in order to prove different (indeed the opposite) points.

Hence we have followed it as a principle that the views of Origen should not be cited as references but, whenever necessary, be *quoted* -even if the quotation would be somewhat long. In view of the reality of the nature of academical works referring to Origen's thought, it has been a conscious practice of ours to ground our views not only on references to titles and chapters of his works, but to cite his words themselves. This constant way of discussing Origen's thought may lead to a work perhaps somewhat lengthier than what it should be, but the scientific benefit out of this procedure great. It is a by-product that we



have taken the opportunity of rendering into English, for the first time, a vast number of crucial passages in Greek, which elucidate Origen's thought. What is more important is that this way of rendering Origen's thought leaves no room for controversy. For it is Origen himself who speaks and it is his own words which elucidate crucial aspects of his thought. We have strongly felt that it only through such an academic practice in composing our work that what Origen really believes could finally be established unquestionably. The conclusions which we have reached with respect to our topic prove that this procedure was worth while. For these conclusions pertain to the most crucial facets of Origen's thought, which are now seen under an entirely new light and against current misapprehensions. At any rate, our conviction that the conception of time constitutes the spine of a thinkers thought has become stronger than it was in the beginning of this research. For our conclusions eliminate fundamental misunderstandings and prove that Origen's influence is far more extensive and decisive than has been reckoned hitherto.

## Chapter 1: God, World and Time

### **§1. God and Time.**

In treating the question of the being of God with respect to time, one can notice Origen's persistent concern to be precise in articulating his views. But on this specific topic there is particular difficulty facing him: he knows that, in order to treat this question, the language is inadequate to express the reality he wants to depict, namely, the being of God; hence his constant concern for accuracy cannot be fulfilled. The main reason is that the tenses of the verbs are always placed in a certain "time";<sup>1</sup> so a verb will be in a *χρόνος*, namely Present tense or Present Perfect tense or Past tense etc. It is impossible to use a verb apart from any implication of time; for verbs (in contrast to nouns or adjectives) not only express an action or a passion or a state of the subject, but also express the time which this action or passion or state of the subject is referred to.

Origen regards the divine reality as a timeless state, namely a reality radically transcendent to time. When, therefore, he intends to speak of God's being, the use of verbs is inappropriate *a priori*; for no verb can be used apart from the implication of time.

This is the difficulty facing Origen and he is conscious of this linguistic impasse. If he held another perception of God's being (for example, if he regarded it as an everlasting duration or a perpetual present), then he would have no difficulty in expressing his views; he could use Present tense. But it is he himself who stresses that God's being cannot be expressed by any of the forms of verbs, because this being is atemporal as God transcends radically all time.

In the Fragment CX of Codex MONAC. 208 Origen quotes John, 1,1 "In the beginning was the Logos" and comments on this as follows:

"In speaking about the Logos of God it would be more accurate to say "is" (ἐστίν); but he (sc. John) has used "was" (ἦν) instead of "is" (ἐστίν) in order to relate the being of the Logos to his incarnation, which took place in a certain time; anyone nevertheless should know that, in referring to the atemporals, he should not regard the meaning of verbs like "was" (ἦν)<sup>2</sup> and "is" (ἐστίν) and "will be" (έσται) literally; for Logos the god who is the son of the father is himself god; therefore the verbs applied to him should not be considered together with the time which they imply, for the son is not under time (ὑπό χρόνον); and we should note that a *verb* is what indicates time (τό προσημαίνον χρόνον), as Aristotle says".<sup>3</sup>

In *fr John* the same view of Origen's is found, quoting the same passage John, 1,1:

"...and, since there are some who have fallen from the right faith thinking that it is only him who was born from the virgin that exists, very ably the theologos writes for them that "In the beginning there was the Logos" (ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος) and using the verbs properly he applied the term "became" (ἐγένετο) to the flesh and the term "was" (ἦν) to the divinity.<sup>4</sup> In speaking of the Logos of God it would be more accurate to say "is" (ἐστίν); but he has used "was" (ἦν) instead of "is" (ἐστίν) in order to relate the being of the Logos to his incarnation, which took place in a certain time; anyone nevertheless should know that, in referring to the atemporals, he should not regard the meaning of verbs literally; for that which is signified by a verb implies the existence of time being together with its existence: for example, when we say "was" (ἦν) we mean that which does not exist any more but existed only in the past; accordingly "is" (ἐστίν) denotes what exists now and "will be" (έσται) denotes what will exist in the future. But one should not think that the time implied by a verb can be applied to the Logos of God, because he is timeless (αἰδιος)".<sup>5</sup>

When, therefore, Origen refers to the being of God he is fully conscious of the fact that it is a reality which transcends all time; and he also knows that, in this case, language is inadequate to express this transcendent reality with the proper accuracy.

In *expProv* he refers to the passage; "It was me who was his delight" (Εγώ ἦμην ἣ προσέχαιρε)<sup>6</sup> and he explains: "The "was" (ἦμην) referring to God does not indicate any existence of time, as it does when it refers to those that are under time, as when someone says "I was in a market place". And since she (sc. Sophia) "was befitting (ἦν ἀρμόζουσα)" God who is without beginning (τῷ ἀνάρχῳ), then she is timeless (αἰδιος), too".<sup>7</sup>

So Origen is clear in expressing his view that God's being is an atemporal reality which transcends all time. Although the use of language for the portrayal of this reality is deemed as inevitably inadequate, he is very cautious of how he articulates his views. He takes the inadequacy of the expressions for granted, yet he is constantly vigilant and tries to reduce this inadequacy to the minimum possible. A passage in *commJohn* is quite a characteristic one:

"I use all these terms, not because they actually apply to God, but because I find myself in an impasse as I stand before, to call them so, ineffable words (ἀπρήτων ρημάτων)<sup>8</sup> which only God or after him his only begotten son is able either to say or to think about himself"<sup>9</sup>.

In view of this opinion about the divine being, God is stated as being "out of the aeon (ἐξ αἰώνος)"; in that case the preposition "ex" (ἐξ) which literally means "out"<sup>10</sup> is befittingly used. The deeper meaning of this expression will also be discussed later in this chapter, as well in chapter 5.

In view of those analyses of Origen's, the assertion of R. Sorabji<sup>11</sup> that Origen did not always have a very firm grasp of the idea of timelessness is not correct. The points where Origen seems to speak as

if God had foreknowledge not timeless knowledge are nothing more than loose and inaccurate expressions used inevitably because of the limited possibilities of language to express what is beyond language. This is exactly the point which Origen has made here.<sup>12</sup>

It is also clear that by the term *αἰδιος* here again Origen means what is timeless and applies it to the reality which (as he calls it) is not "under" time.<sup>13</sup>

In view of these affirmations in Greek, similar ones found in the Latin version of the *Princ* can be regarded as expressing Origen's authentic views:

"Of course, these terms that we use, such as "always" or "has been", or any similar ones that bear a temporal significance, must be interpreted with reservations and not pressed, for they relate to time, but the matters of which we are now speaking, though described in temporal language for the purpose of discussion, in their essential nature transcend all idea of time".<sup>14</sup>

Also by the end of the Fourth Book Origen makes a similar remark:

"This phrase that we use, however, that there never was a time when he did not exist, must be accepted with a reservation. For the very words, when or never, have a temporal significance, whereas the statements we make about the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit must be understood as transcending all time and all ages and all eternity. The rest of things, however, which are external to the Trinity, must be measured by ages and periods of time".<sup>15</sup>

He also<sup>16</sup> refers implicitly to time, as he states that "no thought of before or after can be entertained in respect of" the persons of the Trinity; but what he actually wants to indicate here is not so much the relation of the Trinity to time, but the relation between the Three Persons themselves as beings who are equally co-eternal. What Origen articulates here is his fundamental view that there was no time when

the Son and the Holy Spirit did not exist with the Father *also* because the very being of the Trinity is timeless.<sup>17</sup>

It is most important for the further development of our topic to make clear a point which we regard as fundamental for a proper understanding of Origen's thought. It has to be emphasized that Origen holds a conception of God as radically transcending time not only *with respect to* time but also *before* all time. Although the term "before" here is inevitably used in a loose sense (for "before" makes no sense in the absence of time) the notion indicates is that Origen holds a conception of God regardless of time's existence or non-existence. This comes to mean that Origen holds a conception of God in Himself, namely of God perceived in the absence of any creation or any *thought* of creation. To think of God in Himself does not necessarily entail to think of him as Creator. Hence when one perceives God as Creator, through observation of the outcome of his creative act, this by no means would mean that this perception of God applies to Him Himself.

As this view constitutes a major difference from Platonism and Neoplatonism, and since this facet of Origen's thought has been widely misunderstood, we shall persist on this point in order to make it clear through Origen's own words.

In *Cels* it is affirmed that "it is not absurd that we also should accept the view that the characteristics of God which we know do not apply to *God Himself*. For the attributes of God are superior to any which are known not only to human nature, but even by the natures of the beings which have ascended to the higher ranks of life."<sup>18</sup>

God Himself is "beyond what can be perceived through mind" (ἐνέκεινα τῶν νοητῶν).<sup>19</sup> So "everything we know about God is inferior to God Himself" (πάντα ἃ ἴσμεν εἰσὶν ἑλάττωνα ἐστὶ θεοῦ).<sup>20</sup>

In *selPs* Origen explains how God is "known as Creator and Wise and Provident and Judge"; when he comes to explain the first of these

conceptions of God he states: "And he is Creator because he brought creatures into being out of non-being (καὶ δημιουργός μὲν διὰ τὰ γεγονότα ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ εἶναι).<sup>21</sup>

The knowledge of God as Creator is based on (and derived from) a *because* -namely God as Creator is known through an *act of his will*. But God in Himself cannot be known at all. There is not any "because", there is not any "act", there is no creature through which God could be known in Himself. It is only through Christ and God's self-manifestation that men may visualize a notion of God in Himself.

Thus Origen makes the fundamental distinction of God *in Himself* (ἄγνωστος) and God as *creator* (δημιουργός).<sup>22</sup> In observing creation one does not see anything of God in Himself; all he may see is the wisdom according to which everything has been created; for "In the corporeal heavens God inhabits as creator through his multi-embroidered wisdom".<sup>23</sup>

God in Himself "is unattainable by reason"<sup>24</sup> and "no one knows the exact knowledge which Trinity has of herself".<sup>25</sup>

On this point Origen elaborates by offering brilliant analyses of his view, which is worth following verbatim. For it is through Origen's own words that the distinction between God in Himself and God as Creator is made.

"No one can see God through a procedure of his own mind, as it happens with visible things which are said to be seen through an act of seeing. But God is seen to those whom he might judge that He should be seen by revealing himself. For if one were seeing God, then he would see Him, so to speak, in His quality proper and His magnitude proper (οἶος καὶ ὅσος ἐστίν). But it is not a man who sees, but it is God who shows what is seen; this is why God presents Himself to a way which might be comprehended by creatures. As the saviour says 'I will present myself';<sup>26</sup> he did not say 'he will see me' but he said 'I will present

myself".<sup>27</sup>

Origen is particularly insistent that "the divine things cannot be seen without an action of their own" namely through God's "grace".<sup>28</sup>

Subsequently, creaturely mind "cannot see God through an intellectual act of its own. So we conceive of God, to the extent that it is possible to us, through the theological notions about him -at least those which we have; even so, however, we conceive of Him obscurely. But *God in Himself* (αὐτός δέ ὁ θεός) has a knowledge of Himself not through any means of this kind, but He has a knowledge which is appropriate to Him. For it is Himself who is both the subject and object of comprehension. This is why it is only the Son who knows Him; it is the Son who is comprehended by the Father and he comprehends the Father".<sup>29</sup>

Origen knows that "there are many people who have a conception of *God as Creator*, yet they do not profess Him as a Father of the Son". (Καί πολλοί χούν έχουσιν έννοιαν θεού δημιουργού, ού μὴν ομολογούσιν αὐτόν υιοῦ πατέρα). His view is, however, that to speak of "knowledge" of God is to know Him "in as much as He is God and in as much as He is the Father" (καθό θεός ἐστί καί καθό πατήρ ἐστι).<sup>30</sup>

In view of this, "even if we be found worthy of seeing God now through mind and heart, we see him not 'as he is'<sup>31</sup> but as he appears according to his dispensation towards us";<sup>32</sup> However, *there is* the objective reality of what God is in Himself, albeit creatures cannot now it; and this objective reality is clearly affirmed in the same passage through the expression *ὁ ἐστιν* (which God *is*).<sup>33</sup>

Thus it is Origen's view that, due to the radical chasm between God and the world, any knowledge of God in himself is impossible.<sup>34</sup> He affirms that God is "creator and God of the prophets and Father and God of Christ and our father".<sup>35</sup> But from a worldly point of view, one can see not God in Himself, but God as he presents Himself to us.<sup>36</sup> In



observing creation we have just "conceptions" of God and we do not know him himself but a "conception" of God as Creator.<sup>37</sup>

So "neither can anyone worthily know the uncreated and firstborn of all created nature<sup>38</sup> in the way that the Father who begot him knows him; nor can anyone know the Father in the same way as the living Logos who is God's wisdom and truth."<sup>39</sup>

Even when God will be seen by creatures "as he is",<sup>40</sup> this will happen in the way it is possible to creatures to know God (καθώς εστι δυνατόν τοῖς χενητοῖς γνῶναι τόν Θεόν). For it is not possible to understand the [expression] 'as he is' as meaning God in Himself (οὐ γάρ οἶόν τε ἐκλαμβάνειν τό καθώς ἐστίν ὁ Θεός αὐτός).<sup>41</sup> This is the sense in which it is said that "the prophets or patriarchs or angels have seen God".<sup>42</sup> Again the notion of *God Himself* (ὁ Θεός αὐτός) is clearly explicated.

We know that there is an actual reality of God in Himself, yet this knowledge is not drawn from the observation of creation but from the self-revelation of God himself.

Origen clearly states that this knowledge is exclusively drawn from "the testimonies given" to us (τά μαρτύρια τά παραδεδομένα).<sup>43</sup> What he means by "testimonies" (μαρτύρια) is the divine scriptures<sup>44</sup> and he distinguishes those of Old Testament ("...the testimonies having been said many times...") and those of the New Testament ("...I find new testimonies ... the testimonies of Jesus Christ...").<sup>45</sup>

There is no way to know that God is something more than Creator, but through His own revelation in the person of Jesus. It is through this historical event, namely "incarnation" (διὰ τῆς σαρκώσεως) that the transcendent God became "approachable" (προσιτός) to men.<sup>46</sup> So using "truth and the testimony of events and all sorts of working of wonders as a kind of voice, God suggested His own height to men".<sup>47</sup> Even so, however, divine guidance is necessary; for "the law can be known only by

revelation" and no intellectual ability alone is adequate for that.<sup>48</sup> Which means that the "parables and obscure words" which have been uttered by the Holy Spirit through the prophets need to be "readable" and they become readable to those who are "participants" of the Holy Spirit and taught by him. For "no one who is unmarked and unguided can comprehend the divine Scriptures."<sup>49</sup>

God through his "great providence for the sake of man" guides him and enlightens him toward ways that "human nature itself does not know".<sup>50</sup>

What these affirmations of Origen show is that it is not creation which provides a hint of God's very being, but it is God's own self-revelation. In the final analysis, this means that Origen holds a Theological and not a Cosmological conception of God. For his point of departure in thinking of God, and trying to form theological notions, is not the observation of the world, but it is the self-revelation of God through the scriptures and Jesus Christ. To depict in detail Origen's theology, namely his conception of God in Himself, is out of the scope of this work. We shall refer only to his conception of Wisdom and the Logos; and this, only to the extent which is necessary for the further developement of our topic. For the most important point which needs to be made is not only that Origen holds a conception of *God in Himself* far beyond the notion of *God as Creator*, but also that there is a visualization of a reality *before* any creation, namely a reality in which only God *is* and there is no creation at all. This will lead to the conclusion that the current opinion that Origen cannot think of God without necessarily thinking of him as Creator is entirely erroneous.<sup>51</sup>

So, in spite of the fact that Origen regards God's being as "above" time, as a radically transcendent reality, he goes ahead with a portrayal of God's being in Himself. A major occasion for Origen to expound his views is when he undertakes the task to interpret the passage of John

1,1 "In the beginning (ἐν ἀρχῇ) was the Logos".<sup>52</sup>

In attempting to interpret this passage, Origen faces the greatest challenge to his view of the divine being as a timeless reality. For the term "arche" (ἀρχή) is one of those which par excellence have a temporal implication -as "beginning". How is it possible to speak of God's being as an atemporal state and at the same time to speak of a certain "In the beginning" (ἐν ἀρχῇ)? This is the challenge and he does face it, in order to articulate his views of the life of God as a timeless reality.

Before any discussion about the actual meaning of the afore-stated passage of John, Origen remarks that there are many meanings of the word ἀρχή; and this "multi-signification" of the term (τό πολλασημον τῆς φωνῆς) can be found not only among the Greeks but also into the holy scriptures.<sup>53</sup> So he cites all the different meanings of the term ἀρχή as found in the scripture. It is only after this long analysis that he approaches the passage of John,1,1 in order to offer his own exegesis:

"Having seen that the term ἀρχή means so many things, we now enquire which one of them should be employed in the 'In the ἀρχή was the Logos' (ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος). It is clear that it does not allude to any moving over or to any road or length; it is also obvious that it does not refer to any generation; it is nevertheless possible to consider that it refers to him, who is the maker, whom 'God ordered and everything has been made'.<sup>54</sup> For in a sense it is Christ himself who is the creator, to whom the father says 'let there be light'<sup>55</sup> and 'let there be a firmament'.<sup>56</sup> Christ then is a creator as an ἀρχή, for he is wisdom, being called ἀρχή just because he is wisdom. For it is wisdom who, according to Solomon, says 'The Lord created me at the beginning of his works' (Ὁ θεός ἐκτίσεν με ἀρχὴν οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔρχα αὐτοῦ),<sup>57</sup> so that 'the Logos is in the ἀρχή, that is in the wisdom'.<sup>58</sup>

Further, in the same work, Origen explains: "In interpreting the 'In ἀρχή was the Logos' it is clear (for it is found in many passages of the

Proverbs) that it is the wisdom who is meant by the term  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$ .<sup>59</sup> Thus "one should understand that the Logos has always been in the arche, that is to say, in the wisdom".<sup>60</sup>

Hence Origen's answer is virtually this: The passage in John,1,1, "In arche there was the Logos" is a hypothetical answer not to a hypothetical question "*when* was the Logos" but to the question "*in what* was the Logos".

This is clearly stated further, when he points out that what we have learned from the passage John,1,1, is the answer to "in what" ( $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \tau\acute{\iota}\nu\iota$ ) was the Logos, and the answer was that the Logos was "in the wisdom" ( $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\rho\chi\eta$ ).<sup>61</sup> Further in the same work he reiterates his affirmation that by  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  it is the wisdom herself that should be understood and the passage of John means that the Logos was "in" the wisdom.<sup>62</sup> If a "temporal" meaning should be applied to the " $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\rho\chi\eta$ " this meaning would be nothing but a notion of atemporality, indicated by the fact that the Logos was "in" the wisdom; in such a case the hypothetical question "*when* was the Logos?" would be all the same to the question "*In what* was the Logos?". Indeed there is a point in the same work where Origen states that what we learn by this passage of John is "when *or* in what" the Logos was.<sup>63</sup> After his analyses of the subject (which are extended before as well as after this point in the *comm.John*) it is obvious that the term "when" has been put in such a context that the only significance that remains for it is an atemporal one. This is obviously why Origen has no hesitation (when he says "when *or* in what", twice in that passage) to indicate that, in this case, he regards the terms "when" as well as "in what" as being almost synonyms.<sup>64</sup>

It is therefore obvious that Origen holds a conception of God's being as an atemporal reality; and he feels so strongly about this that he interprets terms like that of  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$ , which currently have a temporal significance, in such a way that the notion of temporality is totally

abolished.

So Origen regards Wisdom as a living personal hypostasis who is identified with the Son of God.<sup>65</sup> This personal being is exactly the person whom God spoke to when he created the world, as described in Genesis. Nevertheless this wisdom exists, as a timeless being, before the creation of the world; and she lives in God before time, as a personal subject, as a substantial living personal hypostasis.<sup>66</sup> For wisdom "is herself a substance, who is begotten before the aeons and she existed as a timeless one even before creation".<sup>67</sup>

The Logos is also identified with the Son of God and he has timelessly been in divine being regardless of any perception of creation.

"But Logos becomes (γίνεται) only in respect to men who formerly were unable to conceive the advent of the son of God, who is the Logos; yet the Logos does not *become* 'with God'<sup>68</sup> as if he formerly were not there, but he is said to be always in the father (παρά δέ τῷ αἰεὶ συνεῖναι τῷ πατρὶ ῥέχεται): 'And the Logos was (ἦν) in God' for 'he did not *become* with God' (οὐ γάρ ἐγένετο πρὸς τὸν Θεόν). And the same verb, namely the 'was' (ἦν) predicates the Logos both when he 'was in ἀρχή' and when he 'was with God'; this means that neither is the Logos separated from the ἀρχή nor is he staying behind (ἀπολειπόμενος) the father; and again this means that neither 'became' Logos in ἀρχή, as if he were not in ἀρχή, nor 'became' he 'in God' as if he were not 'with God' before; for before any existence of time or aeon 'in ἀρχή was the Logos' and 'the Logos was with God' ".<sup>69</sup>

It is also pointed out that "John did not say that Logos *became* or that he *was made* in arche, but he said that 'In the beginning *was* the Logos'. For he was in the beginning creating the heaven and the earth"<sup>70</sup> yet he was existing "before them, being their beginning in the sense that it was him who caused them to be".<sup>71</sup>

Further Origen reaffirms that Logos "who 'was in ἀρχή' " was

"always" (αεί) "with God" being himself god; "he did not obtain this state as if he previously was not with God" but he has always been in the "perpetual view (τῇ αδιαλείπτῳ θείᾳ) of the paternal depth".<sup>72</sup> So Origen refers to "the Logos who lives in himself and yet not separated from the father (καί λόγον τοιούτον καθ' εαυτόν ζώντα). The Logos is not someone else apart from Christ, Logos the god, who is in the father, through whom has everything been created".<sup>73</sup>

In the First Book of the *commJohn* Origen states that "it is necessary to examine painstakingly the conceptions of the son"<sup>74</sup> in order to see which of them have always existed in God before creation (έν μακαριότητι) without any beginning. Is it only wisdom which existed without beginning or is it the Logos too and even life and truth?<sup>75</sup> But, at that point, Origen goes only as far as to articulate just the question. This passage, however, has been seriously distorted by some scholars. C. Bigg<sup>76</sup> has not understood the text itself at all and henceforth he has made serious mistakes on that. So he thinks that Origen here affirms that the son of God was as Wisdom *and* Logos *and* Life *and* Truth. But what Origen does here is just to pose the question: Which of the names of the son *were* in the divine life before creation (έν μακαριότητι) and which of them *became* (ἐπιτεχόνασιν)? And he continues: "Was he perhaps only Wisdom? or was he also Logos or Life as well? and certainly [sc. we should examine if he was] also Truth as well as the rest of what he became for our sake."<sup>77</sup> The text reads thus: Βασανιστέον οὖν συναγαχόντα τάς ονομασίας τοῦ υἱοῦ, ποῖαι αὐτῶν ἐπιτεχόνασιν οὐκ ἂν ἐν μακαριότητι ἀρξαμένων καί μινάντων τῶν ἀγίων γενόμεναι τά τοσάδε. τάχα γάρ σοφία ἔμενεν μόνον ἢ καί λόγος ἢ καί ζωή, πάντως δέ καί ἀληθεια· οὐ μήν δέ καί τά ἄλλα ὅσα δι' ἡμᾶς προσείληφε.". C. Bigg has simply failed to understand the text on the ground of translating it incorrectly. As late as 1966, C. Blanc has made a similar mistake in translating the text in French<sup>78</sup> Although he has grasped that

Origen does here nothing more than to articulate a question (a question which he faces later in the same work, s. *infra*), he finally falls into the same mistake (even though he does not present Origen to be categorical on the point). C. Blanc's main mistake is that he translates the term *τάχα* (which means *perhaps*) as "sans dout" (without doubt) and neglects the two *ἢ* (or) through which Origen poses the question without answering it at that point. It is Origen himself who clearly states what this passage is about. For the paragraph begins through the word *Βασανιστέον οὖν* (One then should enquire ... which of the names ... perhaps ... or ... or ...). In any case, C. Blanc has distorted the meaning of this crucial point of the *commJohn*.

In the Second Book of the same work, however, Origen provides a systematic answer to this question. This answer provides also some quite significant points of his view of time. It is again through a scrupulous philological analysis of scriptural passages that Origen enunciates his views as he ponders upon two passages of John, namely to "In the beginning was the Logos" (ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος)<sup>79</sup> and "life became in the Logos" (ἐν λόγῳ).<sup>80</sup> Referring to these two passages he states:

"Let us regard these two *in* (ἐν) and examine their difference: First, let us see it as it appears in [sc. the expression] 'Logos in beginning' and secondly in [sc. the expression] 'life in Logos'. The Logos did not *become* 'in the beginning'; this is why it is said 'in the beginning *was* the Logos'; for there was not when the ἀρχή was irrational (ἄλογος); but life *became* and this is why 'life is the light of men'.<sup>81</sup> This means that when there was not any man at all there also was not any 'light of men'; for the light of men is understood only in its relation to men. And let no one accuse us, thinking that we are considering all those questions in a sense of temporal sequence; for there can be found no time at all when the third and fourth conceptions of the Logos did not exist yet. In the same way then that it is said that 'everything *became*

through him<sup>82</sup>, not everything *was* through him, and 'there was nothing that *became* without him<sup>83</sup>, [it is] not [said] there was nothing that *was* without him, in the same way life is what *became* in him, not what *was* in him. And again, the Logos was not that which *became* in the beginning but that which *was* in the beginning".<sup>84</sup>

This the sense in which Origen states that Christ (regarded as Creator) is the "source" and "origin" of all virtues.<sup>85</sup> Origen's answer on this point is that, of all the apperceptions of the Son, it is only Wisdom and Logos that *were* beginninglessly with the Father. The rest of them *became*, namely they had a beginning and are directly related to the creative act of God. This point is very significant in order to understand the relation of God to creation in Origen's thought. This is why we elaborate on it later in this chapter, namely on pp. 61-65. We have insisted on rebutting C. Bigg's and C. Blanc's understanding of this point, because it is not just a simple matter of construing Origen's thought in a different way. Their rendering directly entails that Origen held a notion of beginningless creation. This is the point against which we argue, in the final analysis. For, as we extensively discuss and prove in §4 in this chapter, Origen did not hold such a notion.

R. Norris is one more scholar among those who first wore the glasses of Platonism and Neoplatonism and then tried to see Origen's thought through these glasses. The serious mistakes therefore were inevitable, especially where the *Princ* was used as the main source. Thus Norris asserts that "the Logos appears in Origen's system as the first step 'down' from the One in the stream of existence. ... As such, he is, of course, "generated" -but not (as Justin and Tertullian seem to have taught) at some point prior to the creation of the world."<sup>86</sup>

In the light of the abundance of passages where Origen has explicated his view of the Logos, assertions such as that of Norris seem astonishing. This is why we have regarded as an indispensable part of



our method of exposition to quote Origen's own words. For utterly distorting allegations such as those of Norris appear as views of the most of scholars. Norris is so much prejudiced that he seems determined to find Plotinus' world-picture and perception of the Being into Origen's thought. So he thinks that the Plotinian One must be Origen's God. The Plotinian Mind (which is immediately down from the One) must be the Logos, and so on. He is determined to do so because he is too prejudiced with a false impression -this is why he is falls into so big mistakes.<sup>87</sup>

Subsequent to his decision to present Origen as a Platonist, Norris asserts that Origen "insists ... that one cannot think of God without thinking at the same time of the world in which God's creative goodness is manifested."<sup>88</sup> This is a typical phrase (used so often by scholars, so that it has become trivial) describing Plato's thought, as we have seen.

In fact, however, Origen holds a conception of God in Himself apart from any conception of creation whatever. In his perception, the Son of God (conceived as Wisdom and Logos) is in the divine reality as a person who is related to no one but to God. In this state there is nothing of creation but the only reality is the divine one, namely the being of God Himself.

## **§2. The providential creation.**

The important element in our analysis hitherto is that Origen holds a conception of a reality "when"<sup>89</sup> there is neither time nor world, a reality where there is nothing apart from God himself. This is why he states that it is God who is the original "place as it were" (οἶονεῖ τόπος) of the Logos.<sup>90</sup>

Certainly it is utterly difficult to portray this reality, for it is

the divine life itself. What is important at this point, however, is that Origen does hold a perception of a *state before creation* (τά *πρὸ γενέσεως*).<sup>91</sup>

It is out of this reality that God *decides to create* and the notion of "coming into being out of non-being" *begins* to make sense.

This is the most crucial point of Origen's conception of God as creator. The question however is: "what did God create in the beginning?". Only when Origen's answer to this question is comprehended, his entire conception of creation will be comprehended, too.

Origen portrays the Wisdom of God as a "substance" (οὐσία) who exists "before the aeons" (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων) and existed before creation as a timeless (αἰδιος) being; and when *she established a relation to creatures* (τά *γεννητά*), then *she became* the "beginning" (αρχή) of God's ways, both of the *constructional* and *providential* (τῶν ποιητικῶν καὶ προνοητικῶν); so this beginning (αρχή) has been yoked together with the creatures, as *she became their beginning by relating herself to them in creating them*; yet this wisdom is timeless and exists as a substantial subject with God before time (ἡ δὲ σοφία αἰδιος, οὐσιωδῶς πρὸ αἰώνων παρὰ τῷ θεῷ υπάρχουσα).<sup>92</sup>

The crucial element which is therefore introduced by Origen is the distinction of what he calls *providential* (προνοητικῶν) creation from the *constructional* (ποιητικῶν) one which came into existence as a material world.

In fact, Origen considers two different passages of Genesis in order to ground his view that the very creative act of God is but the fact that he brought these *reasons* (λόγοι) into being out of non-being. What God "uttered" was not just "words" but it constituted *a creative act* in itself<sup>93</sup> and these "words" (λόγοι) are exactly the "reasons" (λόγοι) according to which the creation is provided.

The first passage is the saying "Let us make man in our image,

after our likeness ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them".<sup>94</sup>

The second passage is the saying "And the Lord formed man of the dust of the ground".<sup>95</sup>

The conclusion which Origen draws from these scriptural passages is that God "created" human nature yet it is only later that the material element enters into the narration. This means that what was made "in image" of God had nothing to do with "matter" as "the first man" who was made in the image of God" was "immaterial and superior to any corporeal nature".<sup>96</sup>

What kind of "creation" was this? Is this a Platonic perception of an "incorporeal world" made in the beginning, a notion that so many scholars have attributed to Origen?

We can trace Origen's views in other parts of his works in Greek and see that he holds a perception of the outcome of the creative act of God which is far from being what is currently thought to be.

When Origen speaks of the "incorporeal" which came into being out of non-being he refers to nothing else apart from those λόγαι which means both "utterances" of God and "reasons". This is the "incoproreal" that came into being out of non-being.

Origen takes particular care to make this point clear. Thus he states that when it is said that God made Adam, one should take into account that the term "Adam" translated in Greek means just "man". Thus the narration of Moses does not refer to "any *individual*" (οὐχ οὕτως περί ενός τινός) but he refers just to "the human nature" (περί τῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσεως).<sup>97</sup>

Accordingly, in *commMatt*, he points out that one should note that in the first of these passages of the Genesis it is said of "male and female" and not "man and woman". He also remarks that the same phraseology is used in the Hebrew original text and he adduces the words used there.

His view is that the difference is substantial. For the expression "male and female" refer to what has been created "in image" whereas either the term "man" or "woman" can never pertain to what is perceived as "in image" of God (οὐδέποτε γάρ γυνή τό κατ' εἰκόνα οὐδέ ἀνὴρ).<sup>98</sup> Again Origen reiterates his fundamental conception that *the incorporea, creation does not refer to the creation of any individual persons*.

In the *commJohn* he refers to the saying "and God saw that it was good".<sup>99</sup> He again points out that this saying about what was created can pertain but to the "reasons" of things and not to the actual material things. This "creation" is but coming into being of the *reasons* of those which later came into existence. At that point he develops an extensive argument adducing passages from the Genesis. When it is said about "sea beasts"<sup>100</sup> and "cattle, and creeping things, and beasts"<sup>101</sup> how is it possible to say that it was the actual creatures that God saw that it was "good"? Are those beasts "good"? Certainly not, Origen affirms. Therefore it was not these creatures themselves that God saw that it was "good" but "what was good was the *reasons* about them"<sup>102</sup>. The "creation" of the divine wisdom and providence by virtue of which these beasts came into being -this was what God saw as a "good" creature. This is the most subtle point of Origen's conception of creation: Wisdom of God is called both his beginningless son and the product of his creative act, which came into being and "embroidered" the "body" of his son (s. *infra*).

Why (that is, the "reasons" for which) these beasts should come into being certainly are known to God alone. For God does nothing in vain or without reason as even the falling of a small sparrow does not take place independently from God's providence but for everything there is a "reason" known to God only and existing in his wisdom.

So when Origen speaks about an "incorporeal" which was made in the beginning, he does not refer to anything which might be understood

as a *personal individual being*. It was the *reasons* of the world that constitute what was created and these *reasons* were what came into being out of non-being.

It is in the light of this perception that "The son of God is also called wisdom, made as a beginning of his ways to his works, according to the Proverbs<sup>103</sup>, which means that wisdom *existed only in relation to him, of whom she was wisdom, having no relation to anyone else at all* (ή τού Θεού σοφία, πρὸς τὸν οὐ ἐστὶ σοφία υπάρχουσα, ουδεμίαν σχέσιν πρὸς ἑτερόν τινα εἶχεν); but the son of God himself became God's benevolent *decision* (ευδοκία Θεοῦ γενόμενος) and *willed* (ἠβουλήθη) to bring creatures into being. This wisdom then *willed* (ἠθέλησεν) *to establish a creative relation (σχέσιν δημιουργικὴν) to future creatures (πρὸς τὰ ἐσόμενα)* and this is exactly the meaning of the saying that she has been made the beginning of God's ways."<sup>104</sup>

According to this perception of the providential creation, Wisdom is an incorporeal (ασώματος) living (ζῶσα) hypostasis (υπόστασις) of various apperceptions (θεωρήματα), which apperceptions contain the reasons of everything that exists (περιεχόντων τοὺς τῶν ὄντων λόγους). This wisdom is a living personal being, "having a soul as it were" (καὶ οἰοεὶ ἔμψυχον).<sup>105</sup> By this definition Origen refers to both the son of God and the created wisdom, which came into being and "embroidered" the body of the son. We note, nevertheless, that the son of God is persistently regarded not only as living in the same way as God, but also as an individual personal hypostasis of his own. However, it is beyond our scope to elaborate on this point, which needs a full exposition of Origen's theology.

In view of this conception, Origen refers to the wisdom of God as "containing the reasons of everything which has been created"<sup>106</sup>; and "one by one the reasons of those ruled are being in God's Logos and in the Wisdom of his" (οἱ καθ' ἓνα λόγοι τῶν διοικουμένων εἰσὶν ἐν τῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ

Λόγω καί τῇ Σοφίᾳ αὐτοῦ).<sup>107</sup> This is the sense in which Origen distinguishes between the "concepts of God" (τά ἐννοήματα τοῦ Θεοῦ) which later "were somehow substansified and came into actuality" (οὐσιωμένων πως καί εἰς ἔργον ἐρχομένων).<sup>108</sup>

Thus when Origen refers to wisdom, although he clearly regards her as a person, namely as the son of God, he also implies a notion of "multitude" in this wisdom. It is in view of this that he affirms that that "in" Wisdom there are the "reasons, according to which has everything been made by God in wisdom."<sup>109</sup>

In any case, this "former" creative act of God *is not a creation of individual personal beings* and this is a very fundamental element in the discussion of Origen's perception of God as creator. Furthermore, the outcome of this creative act of God is perceived to be *in* God and more specifically, in his wisdom, namely *in Christ*.

This is why Origen, although regarding wisdom as a personal living being, also appears to hold a notion of "multitude" in her. This "multitude" is but what was created by God, namely the "reasons" and the "system of apperceptions" which are in her.

The providential creation is perceived as a causing-into-being out of non-being of the "reasons" of the material world. This is the sense in which this "creation" is said to be incorporeal; for the "reasons" and "apperceptions" are obviously incorporeal.

What was "created" out of the providential creation was not a "man" or a "woman", but it was "male and female", namely it was just "human nature" that came into being out of non-being. This is the sense in which Origen affirms that human being was "first" (πρότερον)<sup>110</sup> made "incorporeal" and what is known as "man and woman" were created "at some later stage" (ὕστερόν γάρ ποτε).<sup>111</sup> The saying "Let us make man in our image after our likeness"<sup>112</sup> "pertains to all men"; and what the "multitude" understand by the expression "in image" is "older"

(ἡρεσβύτερον) than what Adam became when, "because of sin" he assumed "the image of the earthly".<sup>113</sup>

It is obvious then that this "first" creation of God is but the "clear utterances" of God which were "uttered before" (ἡροτρανωθέντας) and actual material creation came into existence according to these "clearly pre-uttered words (or, reasons) which were in the wisdom (κατά τοὺς ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ ἡροτρανωθέντας ὑπὸ Θεοῦ τῶν ἐσομένων λόγους)". This is why Origen, in treating this notion, he constantly uses Future tense in order to refer to the actual creation.<sup>114</sup>

Indeed he affirms that "there are certain creatures which are invisible"<sup>115</sup>, namely incorporeal<sup>116</sup>. What he means by these "incorporeals" are but the "reasons" which were created in the Wisdom and are called "wisdom", too. These reasons are perceived as constituting the "body" of this wisdom and are assimilated to a "book". Origen clearly states that the content of this wisdom is "the reasons of Providence and judgement".<sup>117</sup>

Origen states that it is possible to "see" this wisdom and to comprehend these "reasons". This happens when a rational creature is attains to eternal life<sup>118</sup>. There is a crucial notion of Origen's here, which should be emphasized. Even when this "wisdom" is seen and clearly comprehended, this does not mean that it is *God in Himself* that has been seen. Through this wisdom it is only *God as Creator* that is seen by virtue of the fact that through this wisdom God has manifested himself as Creator, namely as what he *decided* and *willed* to do and not as he is in Himself, who is radically transcendend and beyond any comprehension. Origen clearly enunciates his view that all that can be seen through this wisdom is God "as creator and wise and provident and judge".<sup>119</sup> And when it is said that the contemplation of incorporeals is a contemplation of God as Creator, this ensues from the fact that God is the creator not only of what is corporeal but also of what is incorporeal<sup>120</sup>, namely the

"reasons" of providence and judgement. This is the "system of apperceptions" (τοῦ συστήματος τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ νοημάτων)<sup>121</sup> which constitutes the providential creation. What are understood to be "creatures" in this creation are the "reasons of providence and judgement"<sup>122</sup> and this constitutes the object of "moral and natural and theological" knowledge<sup>123</sup>, namely the object of any kind of knowledge.

This is the context in which Origen speaks of "apperceptions" (θεωρήματα) which have been created and placed into the Wisdom of God and they are called wisdom, too.<sup>124</sup>

So, in going on to portray God as Creator, Origen makes a further step and depicts his notion of "conceptions" (or ideas) (ἐνίνοιαι) of the Wisdom. By this term he refers to certain predicates attributed to the son of God, such as logos, light, truth, christ, king, real vineyard, first and last, beginning and end, paraclete, propitiatory, consecration, good, great arch-priest etc. Origen calls all these names as "conceptions" which are "in" the Wisdom as well as "names of the son".<sup>125</sup>

He also speaks of the "apperceptions (θεωρήματα) of the truth" in order to indicate that "the father does not want to confine and keep them from dispersing (οὐ συνέχων ὁ πατήρ); this is why he makes the figure of these apperceptions in the Logos in a form of "belching out" (ερεύχεται) and this is why the Logos is called as image of the invisible God".<sup>126</sup> It is remarkable that Origen ponders upon the use of the word "belch out" or "disgorge" (ερεύχεται) which is found in the scripture.<sup>127</sup> He avers that other words might seem more appropriate such as "my heart has projected" or "my heart has uttered"; yet it is said "disgorged" [ibid]. What he actually suggests is that the "prefiguration"<sup>128</sup> of these "apperceptions" in the Logos is an *act* of God. It is through the contemplation of these "apperceptions" that one would "see" the father when he sees the son.

This is the sense in which Origen refers to the "apperceptions of



the Logos" (τῶν τοῦ Λόγου θεωρημάτων).<sup>129</sup>

What, therefore, came into being out of non-being was a "multitude" of "wisdom" (σοφίαν) and "reasons" (λόγους) and "forms" (τύπων) and "system of conceptions" (συστήματος νοημάτων)<sup>130</sup> and "apperceptions" (θεωρήματα) and which were made "in wisdom" and were named "wisdom" and placed, as it were, in the Wisdom of God. It is according to this latter conception that wisdom is stated as "created".

Hence Origen's conception of "coming into being out of non-being" pertains to the *providential creation* which is perceived as being *in* the divine life. This is the sense in which he refers to the son of God as a "creature" although he certainly is the outstanding counter-point of what later was known as Arianism.<sup>131</sup>

Subsequently he affirms that "the firstborn of all creation" [Cf. Col.1,15] "is the oldest of all created beings and ... it was to him that God said of the creation of man: 'Let us make man in our image and likeness'.<sup>132</sup> For "wisdom" is regarded as "created" in the "body" of Christ.

It then becomes obvious what Origen means when he regards wisdom not only as the person of the son, but also as the contemplation and apprehension of divine things. It is because in wisdom the father has figured the apprehensions of the truth that it is impossible to apprehend God unless through his wisdom. This is how Origen comprehends the scriptural saying that it is only through the "seeing" of the son that one might "see" the father.<sup>133</sup>

Those "theoremata" are held to be in wisdom out of an *act* of the father. This is why at some points Origen refers to the son of God using the word "creature"<sup>134</sup> although he is clear in enunciating his fundamental opinion that the son is not a creature.

These "theoremata" constitute the "decoration" of wisdom, whom Origen quite often names by the scriptural adjective "multi-

embroidered" (πολυνοίκιος).<sup>135</sup> In those "theoremata" (θεωρήματα) and "reasons" (λόγοι)<sup>136</sup> the explanation of everything in the world can be found. This is the sense in which Origen names as "wisdom" not only the Son of God, as a person, but also the knowledge of the "reasons" according to which everything can be explained and thus clearly known.

The "reasons" is what God created in the beginning. Taking into account that the term *λόγοι* means both "words" and "reasons", Origen's view is that these *λόγοι* are the words of God when he was speaking to his son in the creation of the world according to Genesis. These *λόγοι* of God are but the creative *γεννηθήτω* (*fiat*) out of which the notion of "coming into being out of non-being" began to make sense. It is certainly God who brought them into being but the *act* of this "creation" is portrayed as an "utterance" of the father to the son. These "utterances", in Greek called by Origen *λόγοι* (which means "utterances", "words" and "reasons"), is what actually came into being out of non-being.

The "theoremata" and "reasons" decorate the "body" of wisdom and they are assimilated to "precious stones", yet living ones.<sup>137</sup> It should be emphasized, however, that those "stones" are regarded as living, yet this life is not anyone else's life, but it is the life of wisdom herself, that is the life of the Son of God, as a living personal substantial incorporeal hypostasis. Speaking of "stones", in the Plural, no notion of "distinction" or "division" is implied at all, because this expression is a reference to incorporeal nature in which no notion of "division" makes any sense.

Hence the reality portrayed here is the divine one. There is no corporeal nature and there is no world at all. It is God who lives; for "life without a body is found in the Trinity alone".<sup>138</sup> There is only God who is without parts as he "is entirely one and simple (ὁ θεός μὲν οὐν πάντῃ ἐν ἐστὶν καὶ ἀπλοῦς)".<sup>139</sup> Even the Logos (who exists in timelessness) is "*one* although he comprises many apperceptions, each

apperception being meant as a part of the Logos".<sup>140</sup>

This is the state which Origen calls "bliss" (μακαριότης).<sup>141</sup> What he means by this term is this reality of the divine life;<sup>142</sup> he also uses the term "the heavenly" (τῶν οὐρανίων) or the term "up" (άνω).<sup>143</sup> It is in this context that he refers to "those holies (τῶν αγίων) who live a completely immaterial and incorporeal life in bliss."<sup>144</sup> It should be noted here that the term "holies (τῶν αγίων)" denotes the reality of divine holiness; it is in the same sense that Origen refers to becoming a "citizen of the holies of God", the term "the holies" being a neuter, not a masculine noun. And it is in this sense that statements about "invisible creatures"<sup>145</sup> should be understood. This is why he has no hesitation to call these creatures as "the invisible of God" (τοῖς ἀοράτοις τοῦ Θεοῦ) and "eternal ones", being "eternal (αἰωνίοις)" by virtue of the fact that they are "invisible" (ἀοράτοις)<sup>146</sup> namely because these "creatures" are in the divine reality. It is obvious that since, at this stage, any temporal notion is excluded, the term "eternal" indicates the quality of being in the eternal life, in the same sense that God is very frequently stated as "eternal"; hence this term "eternal" implies a *quality* of being and not any quantity of time, namely any everlasting or beginningless duration, since *duration* itself is excluded from that state.

The fundamental characteristic of this divine reality is "unity" and "agreement". This is actually the kind of unity which applies to the relation of the son to the father. To depict this unity has been a task regarded by Origen significant enough as to devote quite extensive analyses to this.<sup>147</sup>

This is why Origen, although has stressed the radical difference of wisdom from what is created, states:

"Wisdom is a sister of ours; for the Father who made incorporeal nature, made her too; but here it is not the Son of God who is meant, but it is the contemplation of corporeals and incorporeals, as well as

whatever exists in wisdom, either it is has to do with judgement or providence".<sup>148</sup>

So Origen points up that it is possible to speak of wisdom in two ways: First, the term may refer to the son of God himself, who is a personal hypostasis (ἐνυπόστατος). Secondly, it may mean the wisdom which has been given to the faithful either as an oral or as a written speech.<sup>149</sup> This latter meaning actually means what Origen calls "a genus of education and knowledge" (τὴν σοφίαν ἐνταύθα ὡς γένος ἔλαβε τῆς παιδείας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως) because "education and knowledge are included in the wisdom, which is bestowed by the Holy Spirit and this is why education and knowledge are called speech of wisdom".<sup>150</sup> Elsewhere he says that wisdom is a deep understanding of divine reality (ἐπιστήμη θείων) as well as a comprehension of human things (ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων κατάληψις) stating further that wisdom is Christ himself.<sup>151</sup>

This view of Origen's does not imply that he holds two notions about the actual meaning of wisdom; his view remains constant as he fundamentally regards wisdom as a person, identified with the son of God bestowing the knowledge of divine mysteries (elsewhere called as "mystic teaching and contemplation of the truth"<sup>152</sup>), which are called wisdom too. Therefore he uses the term both in order to indicate the person of the son of God as well as to indicate what is bestowed by this person.

Thus in *se/Deut* Origen refers to the "kingdom of heavens" saying that "it is Christ who irrigates this good earth providing the streams of wisdom".<sup>153</sup> In *se/Ps* he refers to those who "reach the end" and find "a table of rational foods prepared by the Lord. For wisdom who is in the Lord will have prepared her own table of luncheon on which she is going to offer her own sacrifices".<sup>154</sup> It is quite characteristic that, within one and the same passage, he speaks of wisdom implying the two meanings he attributes to this term at the same time. In the same work

Origen elaborates on his view of the actual meaning of wisdom as he states: "And it is not only a table of foods that wisdom has prepared but she also offers plenty of wine, which is made from her herself who is the real vineyard; and she offers this wine having mixed the divine mind with human words; and she distributes the wine taking it from this vessel and offering a glass to each one."<sup>155</sup>

It is exactly the notion of the plentitude of divine mysteries existing in wisdom that makes Origen to regard her as being a "hypostasis of various apperceptions".<sup>156</sup>

This idea of conceptions of wisdom does not imply any notion of distinction or division of wisdom herself. Origen stresses that "no one should suppose that these conceptions attributed to the saviour imply any distinction in substance".<sup>157</sup> This means that the various predicates attributed to wisdom do not introduce any actual division in the substance of wisdom herself. If there seems to be a notion of distinction it only stems from the different ways in which human intellect comprehends the son of God.

Once Origen has made this point, he devotes a large part of the First Book of the *commJohn* in order to examine the names attributed to Christ in the various passages of the scripture; for he regards it as "useful to ponder upon the meanings (χρήσιμον ἔσται τό βασανίσαι τὰς ἐννοίας) which stand behind those names".<sup>158</sup>

He is clear not only in portraying the full presence of the Logos in the atemporal being of God; but he also is clear in stating the relation of the Logos to Wisdom.

It is fundamental view of Origen's that although all the conceptions of wisdom are virtually pertain to the same person, namely to the son of God, it is not possible to change the terms mutually when speaking about him. For example, one does not denote the same thing by applying to Christ either the conception of "beginning" or that of the

"end"; he certainly speaks of the same subject but he alludes to different perceptions of him. This is why Origen states that Christ "is not the same when he is named by the conceptions of his" (οὐ κατὰ τὰς ἐννοίας ὁ αὐτός).<sup>159</sup>

It is in this context that Origen points out that the son of God is ἀρχή only when he is conceived as Wisdom, yet he is not ἀρχή when he is conceived as Logos. He points up that "no one should be surprised, that the saviour, as we said before, is many goods (πολλὰ ἀγαθά) and there are many conceptions of his, one first, one second, one third;"<sup>160</sup> and "if anyone is capable of scrutinizing the hidden truth of the scripture he might find the whole range of the conceptions cited there; yet I do not think he will find them all".<sup>161</sup> He concludes that "if one examines painstakingly all the conceptions of the son of God, he will find that he is regarded as ἀρχή only in as much as he is thought as wisdom, and he cannot be regarded as ἀρχή even if he is conceived as Logos".<sup>162</sup>

What Origen wants to denote here is this: There is a whole succession of "conceptions" (ἐννοίαι) which are perceived in a classified way. These conceptions are thought to be in an "order"<sup>163</sup> such as Wisdom - Logos - Life - Truth - Justice- ...etc.<sup>164</sup> This succession is long and it is Origen's conviction that however well may one study the scripture he will not eventually be able to say that he has found all the conceptions of the son of God. In this "order" each conception is what it is "just because" (καθ' ὅ) it is what the previous conception indicates.<sup>165</sup> This means that each conception in the order is understood to be "broader" in relation to its next. Thus, he asserts that wisdom is a conception of the son which is, as it were, "broader" than that of Logos; for Logos "was in ἀρχή", that is to say that Logos was "in Wisdom" because it is only Wisdom who can be conceived as ἀρχή. Since, therefore, Wisdom "contains", so to speak, the Logos, it follows that Wisdom is a conception "broader" than the conception of Logos. So the

Logos cannot be regarded as ἀρχή, exactly because ἀρχή is a "broader" conception than that of the Logos.

Indeed it is Origen's conviction that wisdom is ἀρχή because she is God's wisdom in herself, while Logos alone cannot be considered as a full manifestation of God's wisdom. Wisdom is ἀρχή because she can be manifested as Logos and to be comprehended by creation which was made "in wisdom"; she is ἀρχή because she "contains" Logos, she can be manifested as Logos. She "contains" the Logos yet she is not "contained" in him.

This is the meaning according to which the Logos cannot be thought as ἀρχή. Logos is a "particular", so to speak, manifestation of wisdom because (as stated in John,1,1) the Logos was in ἀρχή, namely he was *in* the Wisdom.

In like a manner Logos is thought to be broader to its next conception, namely to that of "life". For life "was made *in* the Logos".<sup>166</sup>

So the Logos is the Wisdom of God manifested in such a way that she can be conceived by rational creatures. Creation contains rationality and it is in this way manifesting God's wisdom. Again, the Logos is God's wisdom that creates life and rationality.<sup>167</sup> Logos is the way through which rational creatures receive a hint about God's wisdom, because the Logos is Wisdom herself manifested in the creation as Logos.

There is therefore neither any difference between wisdom and Logos in substance nor any ontological classification of them, for the simple reason that there is no essential distinction at all. The distinction which Origen makes is nothing more than an intellectual one and this is why he speaks of *conceptions* of the son of God. And certainly there is no notion of temporal distinction between them whatever, as both the conceptions are clearly stated as being in the atemporal being of God.

Concerning the notion of *providential creation*, the question which

arises is this: Do all the conceptions of Christ make sense when God is conceived *in Himself* without any notion of *creative act*? When God is perceived in Himself, and not as creator, when God is perceived as it were *before he decided to create*, does it make sense to speak of "conceptions" of the son of God? And if it does, which of them make sense in God's divine timelessness before any decision of His to create and before any creative act of his?<sup>168</sup>

It is actually Origen himself who poses this question in a certain point of his work;<sup>169</sup> although he there leaves this question without any further examination, he does not fail to face it later in the same work.

Having seen what the actual meaning of the succession of son's conception is, Origen raised the question of their sense in relation to world and to time. His answer is that, among all those conceptions, it is only the Logos who has always existed in the atemporal being of God even in the reality that God had not yet decided to create. The Logos was present in God's wisdom eternally when there was not any creation at all. It is him "through whom" the world was made, but the Logos was not himself made *ad hoc*, Logos was not "made" at all; for he always "was with God".<sup>170</sup>

The rest of the son's conceptions, however, had a beginning. For they make sense only in as much as God is regarded as Creator. They appear *providentially* when God made the providential creation, into the "system of apperceptions that was created" but they make *actual* sense only when actual creation came into being. For in order to speak of "conceptions" there must be *individuals* who "conceive" of Christ in one way or another. Thus, in order to conceive of Christ as a "shepherd" there must be an actual "flock", otherwise this conception makes no sense.

It is only after those analyses that we can properly enquiry Origen's assertion that the son of God "is many goods" (πολλὰ ἀγαθά



ών).<sup>171</sup> He clearly explains that those "goods" are not anything but the "conceptions" of the son. These "goods" therefore do not at all imply any kind of Platonic notion of "ideas". It is mainly in terms of time that Origen makes his point perfectly clear; for these "goods" are not of any Platonic sort of atemporal ideas existing in themselves; but they are meant to exist only "in our perception" (κατ' ἐνίνοιαν),<sup>172</sup> not in themselves as individual and distinct beings. Thus all the "conceptions" after Wisdom and Logos can make sense only in presence of time, namely in the presence of the actual material creation;<sup>173</sup> for, as Origen enunciates, the rest of son's conceptions, from the third downwards, may exist only in presence of time.<sup>174</sup> It is therefore obvious that there can be no similarity of these "goods", as stated by Origen, to any Platonic notion of atemporal "ideas" existing in themselves as distinct individuals.

With respect to this subject, there is a significant distinction that Origen makes of the conceptions of Christ. They are considered as distinguished in three categories:

First, conceptions which do not pertain to Christ in himself but only "to others" (οὐχ αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' ἐτέροις);<sup>175</sup> such are the predications of him as "shepherd", "way", "gate", "rod".

Secondly, conceptions which pertain both to Christ in himself and to others (αὐτῷ καὶ ἐτέροις);<sup>176</sup> such is the conception of Christ as Logos; also as Wisdom, to the extent that wisdom can be comprehended by creatures.

Thirdly, conceptions which pertain only to Christ in himself and to no one else (ἐαυτῷ καὶ οὐδενί).<sup>177</sup> In this category there is the conception of Christ as Wisdom, inasmuch as a certain "system of apperceptions in him" (συστήματος θεωρημάτων ὄντος ἐν αὐτῷ) cannot be comprehended by any created nature.

In view of this third category of conceptions, Origen speaks of

Christ stating that "there is a system of apperceptions in him, in as much as he is wisdom, some of which are incomprehensible to the rest of the created nature (τῇ σοφίᾳ παρ' αὐτόν γεννητῇ φύσει)."<sup>178</sup> Accordingly, he states that the "multitude of apperceptions" (τό πλῆθος τῶν θεωρημάτων) about Christ is incomprehensible not only to human beings but also to all creatures, for it is only Christ and the Holy Spirit who can comprehend them.<sup>179</sup>

Referring to the conception of "life" (which is the pivotal indication of the actual spatio-temporal reality), Origen affirms that this conception belongs to the First category, namely Christ conceived as "life" is a conception pertaining not to him himself but to others (οὐχ αὐτῷ ἀλλὰ ἐτέροις).<sup>180</sup>

It is our conclusion therefore that there can be no notion of "life" of rational creatures "before" the creation of bodily nature itself. If one speaks about *life* "before" the existence of bodily nature he cannot speak of anything else than the life of God himself. Life referred to "rational creatures" "before" the creation of bodily nature is unthinkable. It is also an absurd philosophical category when it is applied to rational creatures "before" time.<sup>181</sup> This is why Origen states that "life", as a conception of the son, did not exist in timelessness but it "became" with creation.<sup>182</sup>

Therefore, one can speak of "creaturely life" only with respect to the actual creation when the notion of "others", namely when creatures come into existence and the notion of "diversification" begins to make sense. "Before" the actual creation, the term "life" applies only to divine life. For "the Father is life and, being life, he sets forth life" and God, as life, "established a relation to rational creatures, as he willed to benefit them"<sup>183</sup> and so "he brought them into existence".<sup>184</sup> This creatures' coming into existence indicates the actual creation of the world and it is directly related to a notion of "diversification" which

stems from the fall out of the divine life. This conception of the fall is what we shall examine next.

### §3. The Fall and Creation of the World.

In treating Origen's conception of the fall, our previous discussion about what he calls *the state before creation* (τά πρό γενέσεως)<sup>185</sup> should be taken into consideration.

There is only one actual meaning which the term "life" can have when it is applied to that reality: This is the divine life. For in that state there is no actual world; subsequently, there is no corporeality and time as these realities are closely connected to the actual existence of the world.<sup>186</sup>

What therefore "lives" is the Trinity, as "life without a body can be found in the Trinity alone".<sup>187</sup> We have nevertheless pointed that Origen holds a notion about the wisdom of God as a "multi-embroidered" (πολυνοίκιος) one (as in Eph., 3, 10). This implies a notion of "multitude", but this "multitude" suggests no notion of "distinction"; "for it is impossible to speak of a part of what is incorporeal or to make any division in it".<sup>188</sup> Yet Origen regards wisdom as a "living incorporeal hypostasis of various apperceptions",<sup>189</sup> which are regarded as "containing the reasons of everything".<sup>190</sup>

In *commEph* there is a passage of utmost importance. He refers to the phrase of Paul's "we, like everyone else, were in our nature children of wrath"<sup>191</sup> and he comments on it as follows:

"We do not know what those who introduce the theory about spiritual natures existing in the beginning would answer to the [saying] 'We, like everyone else, were in our nature children of wrath'; for how is it possible that someone who by nature is son of God be named as son 'of wrath'? this is what they have to answer to. But it is because of our 'body of humiliation'<sup>192</sup> that we think we have become 'children of wrath

in our nature', when our mind 'had since our youth been inclined toward evil things'<sup>193</sup> (εἰς δέ τό 'ἡμεθα φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς ὡς καί οἱ ῥοινοί', οὐκ οἶδαμεν ὅ,τι ποτέ ἐρούσιν οἱ τὰς πνευματικὰς ἀρχήθιν φύσεις εἰσάχοντες' πῶς γάρ ὁ φύσει υἱὸς θεοῦ φύσει εἶναι ῥέχεται υἱὸς 'ὀργῆς' ἀποκρινέσθωσαν. ἡμεῖς δέ οἰόμεθα διὰ τό 'σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως' γεχονέναι 'τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς' ὅτε 'ἐνέκειτο' ἡμῶν 'ἡ διάνοια ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκ νεότητος')".<sup>194</sup>

The notion implied in this passage is that the world is a product of wrath. It is certainly not accidental that Origen alludes to his notion of the fall referring both to the bodily nature itself (from Paul's Phil.3,21) and to God's wrath because of men's disobedience, as implied in the cited passage from Genesis. Both those notions imply, to a certain extent, to his conception of the fall, as constituting the "cause" of world's coming into existence.

Origen's conception of the fall, as stated in his works, is the most delicate of the notions which constitute his entire theology. We certainly refer to his written thought; for although he held a certain conception of the fall, he has deliberately avoided to expound it explicitly in writing. We shall argue that many of the misapprehensions of his thought are due to failure to grasp this particular facet of his thought.

There is nowhere in Origen's works preserved in Greek that a systematic exposition of his conception of the fall can be found. Systematic analyses of the various meanings of ἀρχή have been preserved; exegeses on the notion of "world" are extant too; but Origen does not explicate his conception of the fall. As we shall argue, this is not accidental at all.

Many things have been said about Origen's mysticism;<sup>195</sup> yet these analyses are actually drawn from what he has actually expressed. Origen himself was in fact haunted by the fear that he might articulate those of his mystical perceptions that he was not allowed to. He was always bearing in mind that there are certain mystical truths that God granted

some people, yet he forbade them from saying them aloud. He was constantly thinking of what Paul says in 2 Cor, 12, 4 about "ineffable words, that man is prohibited from uttering".

As a preacher he always felt himself on the horns of a dilemma: On the one hand he was feeling that it was not his right to deprive people from the wisdom which God granted him; on the other hand his fear was that he might utter more than what he was allowed to. This agony is with particular strain expressed in his *Dial*; intending to speak about the soul (a topic directly related to the concept of fall) he makes a long introduction emphasizing that "The ideas are delicate" and therefore they demand listeners who are able to apprehend the deeper truths<sup>196</sup> because "we have reached a mystical doctrine" (ἐνὶ λόγον ἡρώμεν μυστικόν).<sup>197</sup> And here is how he feels on saying a few words about this mystical truth:

"I feel agony intending to speak; I feel agony intending not to speak (Ἀγωνιώ εἰπεῖν, αγωνιώ καὶ μὴ εἰπεῖν). Because of those who are worthy I want to speak, lest I be accused of depriving of the word those able to understand it. Because of the unworthy I shrink from speaking for the reasons I have given, lest I should be flinging holy things to dogs and casting pearls before swine. It was the work of Jesus only to know how to distinguish among his hearers between those without and those within, so that he spoke to those without in parables, but explained the parables to those who entered into his house.<sup>198</sup> To remain without and to enter into the house have a mystical meaning (μυστικόν ἐστίν). 'Why should I judge those that are without?'<sup>199</sup> Every sinner is without. That is why those without are addressed in parables in case they should be able to leave the things without and enter the things within. To enter the house has a mystical meaning (μυστικόν ἐστίν); he who enters Jesus' house is his true disciple. He enters by holding the doctrine of the church, by living a life according to the teaching of the church. 'Within'

and 'without' have a spiritual sense."<sup>200</sup>

He regards the concept of fall as a mystical truth, which should be not uttered or articulated at all. For, as he points out, to enquire deeply in and speak about "the creation of the Lucifer, is beyond our ability. For the doctrine about this question is great and difficult to speculate" (Πολύς γάρ ὁ περὶ τούτου λόγος καὶ δυσθεώρητος).<sup>201</sup>

Accordingly he states that "only few people are able to comprehend those who more systematically expound the doctrines about *the state before creation* (τὰ πρὸ γενέσεως) and the deeper meaning of creation (καὶ τὰ ἐν γενέσει) of each one; these doctrines might embarrass one (ταράξαι ἂν τινα τὰ τοιαύτα) who will have heard but not exactly understood them (συνέντα μὲν ταῦτα, μὴ ακριβούντα δέ); this is why we imperil ourselves in relation to these [doctrines]; for to speak about and elaborate on them is precarious (επισφαλές) although the doctrines are true (τό λέγειν καὶ αναπτύσσειν τὰ τοιαύτα ἐστὶν επισφαλές κὰν ἀληθεύηται)".<sup>202</sup>

This concern that his thought might be misunderstood haunted Origen throughout his life.<sup>203</sup> However, despite his cautiousness and his reticence about doctrines which might be misunderstood, history shows that he finally did not avoid what he was afraid of, namely to be miscomprehended.

This is Origen's personal background against which, in *Cels*, he refers to the conception of the fall; yet all he says on this subject is this: "And the man who is evicted from paradise together with his wife ... has a meaning which is ineffable and mystical".<sup>204</sup> In view of what he held about those truths which are "ineffable and mystical" it is not surprising that he has deliberately avoided to set forth a systematic analysis of his conception of the fall.

We can, however, find some references that Origen makes on this subject at some points of his work in Greek. Consequently, we could

identify some vital elements of his conception of the fall. We can also use the Latin rendering of the *Princ*, but in this case we should use this work with much more caution than usually. In the Introduction we have argued that this work should not be used (as it usually is) in order to interpret Origen's thought; but it should be used as an ancillary source. What is stated in the *Princ*, should be interpreted in the light of Origen's views as found in his writings in Greek. As regards the conception of the fall, the *Princ*, should be cleared from many of Rufinus' misinterpretations as well as from views falsely attributed to Origen by others and most unfortunately embodied in Koetschau's edition. Nevertheless this work will be taken into account where statements extant only in Latin are corroborated by affirmations preserved in Greek.

Considering Origen's perception of God and creation there are two existential realities which have been distinguished so far:

First, the reality of God, the divine life in which there is nothing but God in himself.

Secondly, the divine reality in which God "decorated" the "body" of the "multi-embroidered" wisdom, namely the providential creation which came into being out of non-being. This marks the creation of incorporeal nature, yet this is not anyone else but it is the person of Christ who lives as Wisdom whereas the created "reasons" and "theoremata" are also called "wisdom"<sup>205</sup> and are regarded as decorating the "body" of Christ.

Thirdly, the fall out of the "body" of Christ. It is then that the actual creation comes into being out of non-being, namely space-time comes into existence and rational creatures, as individual personalities, come into being.<sup>206</sup>

This explicit statement of Origen's views, once it has been enunciated in words, seems already paradoxical. For how the Second

reality can be said to be "after" the First one since there was no time?

We see, therefore, that the explicit statement requires compromise to discuss what *appears as a paradox only once articulated in words*. For there is no doubt that any one can conceptually think of a reality "before" creation, which however cannot be stated as "before". In any case the paradoxicality of expressions does not stop here.

The Second reality is that in which incorporeal nature was made. Origen has already affirmed that what in Genesis is stated to have been made "in image" of God has nothing to do with "matter" as "the first man" who was made "in image of God" was "immaterial and superior to any corporeal nature".<sup>207</sup> The question here is: "Was this *life* ?". The answer to this question is undoubtedly negative. For the category of *life* pertains *only* to what is related to *time* since the conception of "life" is directly related to the actual creation of the world.<sup>208</sup>

Thus, when Origen speaks of "first" creation he does not refer to anything else but to an "act" of God *in* his wisdom. Speaking of *life* in that reality it is the divine life which should be understood.

Thus there is a reality which appears paradoxical, too: On the one hand *there is a created reality* yet, on the other, *there is no creaturely life*. For, at that state, it is only the Son of God whom the predication of life pertains to.

When, therefore, Origen speaks of "first" creation which was "incorporeal" he does not refer to any "incorporeal world" whatever. For in a strict sense there is no world at all. The reality is the "body" of Christ, which was "embroidered" by those "made". To those who attribute a Platonic conception to Origen<sup>209</sup> it should be said that Origen makes a very fundamental distinction:

Although God is incorporeal and what was made was incorporeal too, there is a profound difference between them: The "made" incorporeal is explicitly said not to be ομοούσιον (co-essential) with God



himself.<sup>210</sup> The difference lies exactly in the fact that the latter incorporeal nature is *created* whereas God himself is *uncreated*. Thus Origen's conception is actually different from any Platonic one. For Plato never made such a substantial distinction which in Origen is indicative of his entire conception of the whole question.<sup>211</sup>

When G. Florovski<sup>212</sup> states that the "difference" between God and the world lies in the fact that they are not "co-essential" he is unaware that he does nothing but merely repeat the views of Origen, whom he so often rebuked for what he thought to be Origen's conception of the world.<sup>213</sup> This is why Florovski feels it necessary to appeal to Augustine who said; "non Dei natura, sed a Deo sit facta de nihilo ... quapropter creaturam universam neque *consubstantialem* Deo, neque coaeternam fas es dicere, aut credere" (Nature was not created from God but by God ... Hence we should not say or believe that universe is co-substantial or co-eternal with God).<sup>214</sup> For what Florovski adduces as Augustine's views are actually Origen's affirmations about the "non-consubstantiality" of God and creation. He also speaks about a distance between of God and the world, yet "not a spatial one but pertaining to nature" (οὐ τόνῳ ἀλλὰ φύσει) appealing to John of Damascus<sup>215</sup> whereas it is but an affirmation of Origen in the *commJohn* (οὐ τόνῳ)<sup>216</sup> employed by John of Damascus.

What was "made" as incorporeal was not a world of living individual persons, as already discussed. On the other hand, however, it is not quite that simple to say that it was *not living*, namely that it was just a whole of "ideas" or "forms" in God's mind as Philo might have said. If those "made" incorporeals were just something like that, then it would be extremely difficult, if possible at all, for the conception of the fall to make sense. For another substantial difference between those "made" incorporeals and the divine essence lies in the fact that the created incorporeal is susceptible of a kind of "change". As Origen argues those which are "co-essential" are also susceptible of the same

properties" alluding to the notion of fall on which though he does not wish to elaborate.

This is the most delicate point of Origen's entire conception. What one would comprehend at that point is that those incorporeals were *living* yet *not a life of their own*, but the life of Christ. This is what seems to be a paradox and which Origen did not wish to elaborate on. A figure of this perception might be traced in Paul's saying "I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me",<sup>217</sup> a saying which Origen quite often appeals to and we are going to discuss about Origen's deeper perception of it in chapter 5. It is also in the saying of Paul's who speaks of being "one flesh" and that marriage is "a great mystery" concerning "Christ and the church".<sup>218</sup>

It is out of this state that fall occurs. In Origen's view the fall is *a fall from God*.<sup>219</sup> It is because of this view that he criticizes Heracleon who wrote that the Logos in his relation to creation is not he "*from whom*" or "*by whom*", but he only is he "*through whom*" creation was made.<sup>220</sup> Origen objects to this view, but he does not further elaborate, just because he holds the doctrine of the fall to be a mystical one; he only says that he also has treated the notion of "*through whom*", but Heracleon, as it seems from the above-mentioned opinion of his, seems not to have been taught by the divine writings.<sup>221</sup>

Elsewhere, however, Origen states more clearly that the world has come "*out*" of God.<sup>222</sup> For it is Paul who, in Rom. 11,36, has portrayed the beginning of everything by the expression "*out of him* (ἐξ αὐτοῦ)".<sup>223</sup>

In general the scriptural passages where Origen grounds this view, namely, that the world came *out* of God are the following: The I Cor.8,6 stating "yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist..."; the above-mentioned Rom,11,36 "For from him and through him and to him are all things..."<sup>224</sup> as well as the saying in John 13,3.<sup>225</sup>

Origen is extremely cautious in adumbrating<sup>226</sup> how this fall occurred. The step he makes towards this direction is to introduce the notion that a "moulting (ντεροπρήσις)" is possible from the body of wisdom.<sup>227</sup> This is the most mystical point of this conception of Origen; and he tries to express this view in a manner appropriate to the case, namely not by words of his own, but through scriptural ones, namely appealing to the prophet Ezekiel. A significant passage in *Princ*, reads as follows:

"But let us now see what the actual words of prophecy teach us. 'The word of the Lord', it says, came unto me me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation for the prince of Tyre, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God: Thou wert a signet of likeness and a crown of honour in the delights of the paradise of God. Thou wast adorned with every fine stone and gem, and wast clothed with sardius and topaz and emerald and carbuncle and sapphire and jasper, set in gold and silver, and with agate and amethyst and chrysolite and beryl and onyx; with gold also didst thou fill thy treasures and thy store-houses in thy midst. From the day thou wast created with the cherubim, I placed you in the holy mount of God. Thou wast in the midst of the fiery stones, thou wast stainless in thy days, from the day thou wast created until the time that iniquities were found in thee; from the multitude of thy commerce thou didst fill thy storehouses with iniquity, and thou didst sin and wast cast wounded out of the mount of God. A cherub drove thee forth from the midst of the fiery stones. Thy heart was lifted up at thine honour; thy knowledge was corrupted with thy beauty; for the multitude of thy sins I have cast thee down to the earth in the presence of kings.<sup>228</sup>

Origen's opinion about this passage is that it refers to "an adverse power" which "was formerly holy and blessed" and "fell from this state of blessedness and was cast down into the earth ... from the time that iniquity was found in him", and that his fallen condition was not due to

his nature."<sup>229</sup>

The fall is regarded as a fall of "one"; in the passage above it is Rufinus rather than Origen that feels it necessary to fill the expression by saying "an adverse power"; for Origen himself avoids to say anything more about this, speaking just of "one"; he leaves this numerical just like that, avoiding elaboration as to "who" or "what" is this "one". Thus he speaks of "one, who fell from the bliss",<sup>230</sup> further he speaks of "one" applying the adjective "ruler" without stating any noun again; "while there were many rulers (αρχόντων) who were made (γενομένων), it was one who fell".<sup>231</sup>

It is not without significance that Origen does not apply any noun to that "one" who fell. This directly stems from his view that in that divine reality what really exists is "unity".<sup>232</sup> It should also be noted that the adjective "archonton" (αρχόντων) (which means "rulers") comes directly from the word "arche" (αρχή).<sup>233</sup>

Whenever Origen speaks of the fall, he refers to that as a fall of "one"<sup>234</sup> who has "moulted" (πτεροπυήσας) and therefore fell from the "bliss",<sup>235</sup> for he formerly was in the paradise of God but he, as it were, satiated and was lost, according to him<sup>236</sup> who said mystically; 'you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more for ever' ".<sup>237</sup>

Origen calls also this "one" as "the first" (ὁ πρῶτος),<sup>238</sup> for "after the moulting of the first (τῷ πρῶτῳ πτεροπυήσαντι) others moulted too (καί ὅτι ἀπό τινων πτεροπυησάντων) and followed this first one down (καί κατακοθυησάντων τῷ πρῶτῳ)".<sup>239</sup> He also describes this "one" as "malicious" (πονηρού) and it is quite characteristic that he there uses the Past participle "ekpessontos" (ἐκπessόντος) of the verb ἐκπίντω which means "fall down out of a place"; in this way Origen denotes both his notions about the fall, namely that this is a fall *out* of the divine being as well as a fall *down*.<sup>240</sup>

Certainly when Origen refers not to the very occurrence of the fall,

but to the aftermath of it, he attributes a number of names to this "one" who "first" fell. He names him as a "dragon" or as a "big sea-monster" (as in Job,3,8) as well as he attributes to him other names, usually drawn from allegorical interpretations of the scripture.<sup>241</sup>

Once Origen has articulated this fundamental notion about the fall of the "one", he refers to "some others" who "moulted" too and "followed" the "first" "down".<sup>242</sup>

There is a characteristic point which Origen makes in the *comm. John*. He refers to the devil who fell and in John is stated as "man-killer" (ανθρωποκτόνος).<sup>243</sup> He there states that the devil, who killed the man who was made "in image" of God, did not perpetrate this "killing" to any particular *individual* creature; but this expression refers to human nature in general (ού διά τινα ένα ιδίως ποιόν, αλλά δι' όλον τό γένος ό απέκτεινεν).<sup>244</sup> In this way Origen reiterates his view that the providential creation of man does not refer to any *individual* creature but it signifies *human nature* in general. In the same passage, however, Origen affirms his view that this creature was not just an "idea" in God's mind but it was living. As this fall of Adam is stated as "death", Origen argues that "strictly speaking, no one can be said to be *dead* unless he *lived* before".<sup>245</sup>

The very result of the fall is the creation's coming into existence out of non-existence. More specifically, it means the creation of bodily nature, the creation of matter itself for those who "needed a material life" and this is why the "world has become a material one".<sup>246</sup> He also states that "once the dragon fell down from the clear life" which was "immaterial and absolutely incorporeal" he has "before anything else been bound with matter and body".<sup>247</sup>

There is, however, a more substantial fact which stands behind the emergence of corporeality; the fundamental result of the fall is the destruction of the original unity; what appears is a "multitude of

number" (πλήθος αριθμού), "schism" (σχίσμα), "division" (διαίρεσις) and "disagreement" (διαφωνία). In Origen's view, all those are "signs of wickedness". So strong a conviction on his this point is, that to regard all these characteristics as "signs of wickedness" is explicitly established as an exegetical principle. Thus he states that whenever these notions are found in the scripture, they should be regarded as significations of evil and the relevant passages should be interpreted accordingly.<sup>248</sup>

There is nevertheless a crucial question which is a fundamental prerequisite for an apprehension of Origen's conception of the fall. The question is "what was that who fell?"; and from this a subsequent question follows; "what constitutes the personal identity of the rational creatures?".

This question is directly related to Origen's concept of "moulting" (ντεροπύνησις) which as we said above is the most mystical point of the conception of the fall; yet it has to be answered, at least to the extent that it might be possible, because it is the pivotal point of this whole conception.

It is a fundamental view of Origen's that the "end" will be like the "beginning".<sup>249</sup> Although he does not elaborate on the "essence" of this "one" who fell, he does so when he exposes his view about the end. We cited above a significant passage from the *Princ*, where Origen speaks that this "one" had been placed by God "in the midst" of precious stones.<sup>250</sup> He does not say however what this "one" was in himself; we learn "where" he was (namely, that he was in the divine reality), we understand that he was incorporeal (because he was in divine reality).<sup>251</sup> We learned also "in the midst" of what he was (namely, that he was in the midst of precious stones), but we may learn nothing more about this "one" in himself.

It is in *Cels* that we learn that this "one", in his original and

immaculate state, was a "precious stone" himself; this sense in which he was placed in the divine reality among other precious stones; he was placed in the "body" of the wisdom and he was an "ornament" of the "multi-embroidered" wisdom; he was a "living stone",<sup>252</sup> yet the life was not *his* life, but it was the divine life of the wisdom herself. Origen stresses that the reference of the scripture to "precious stones" has a "mystical meaning" yet he notes that "those just are meant to be every species of select and precious stones",<sup>253</sup> and "the divine utterances teach about resurrection in a mystical way for those who are able to listen to the voice of God by a more divine hearing and they say that" "the body of Christ ... will be rebuilt with stones which are living as well as precious ones".<sup>254</sup>

What, therefore, fell was an "ornament" from the "body" of Wisdom. We cannot however say that this "ornament", this "precious" "living stone", was living as an *individual* in divine eternity; for there can be neither "distinction" nor "division" in divine life which is incorporeal; and it is Origen who clearly states "we cannot speak of parts of what is incorporeal"<sup>255</sup> as well as that what was created in the providential creation was not any *individual* creature.

It should be emphasized that it is mainly this point on which Origen has deliberately avoided to express his views explicitly. Even though he has said certain things of his doctrine of the fall, yet he continues thus: "We have exposed a few of our views according to our faith in the scripture; we did so having made a bold venture upon the subject (ἀποτετολμημένως), and having made a risky venture (παράκεκινδυνευμένως); but we have actually said nothing."<sup>256</sup>

It is out of this "said nothing" of Origen's that one should try to portray his conception of the fall. There is no other way as he deliberately does not state his views on the question explicitly. But to attribute to Origen a Platonic notion about pre-existing incorporeal

rational creatures which received a body is just a simplistic and misleading solution which utterly garbles his views.

Origen himself was aware of the Platonic theory on the question. Yet he says that "the man who is evicted from paradise together with his wife "clothed in garments of skins",<sup>257</sup> which were made by God because of the human offence, has an ineffable and mystical sense, which is higher than the notion of Plato who holds that soul comes down and moults 'until it finds something solid'".<sup>258</sup> And in *se/Gen* he again comments on the same passage of Genesis and clearly rejects the exegesis that the "garments of skins" mean the assuming of a material body and he argues on that saying: "If the garments of skins signify flesh and bones, how is it possible that before that Adam says: 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh'?"<sup>259</sup> He, again, however, does not explicate his opinion on the question. He deems it enough to contrast explicitly his own views from the Platonic ones referring to them by name; all he says here is that one "should enquire into the hidden treasure of the scriptural letter".<sup>260</sup>

Since, therefore, it is Origen himself who quotes Plato and contrast his own views from the Platonic ones, it would be at least a simplistic opinion to attribute Platonism to him on this notion.<sup>261</sup>

In Origen's view the personal life of creatures begins only with the actual creation coming into existence. For it is only then that they begin to exist as individual and personal beings; it is only then that they acquire a life of their own. This is why he refers to rational creatures speaking of "the first moment of their creation by God"<sup>262</sup> as well as about "the time their personality first emerged".<sup>263</sup> These are of course expressions from the Latin rendering of the *Princ*, where, as we have noted, temporal terms are used too frequently and too awkwardly; yet we can discern Origen's core of thought on the question behind expressions of this kind.



What might seem as a paradox in Origen's understanding of this question is that while *coming into being out of non-being* refers to an occurrence *into* the divine life, *creaturely life* pertains to space-time. This is the slight difference which should be taken into account in enquiring into Origen's views. This former notion refers to the Second of the realities stated above, whereas the latter refers to the Third one. The former refers to the unity *in* the "body" of Christ, the latter refers to the creation of diversity and individuality, *out* of the divine reality, namely the "world". When Origen affirms that *life* is one of the conceptions that does not pertain to Christ in himself but only "to others" (οὐχ αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' ἐτέροις)<sup>264</sup> it is obvious that a fundamental premise has been established: The predication *others* in itself implies a notion of *distinction* -a notion which by no means can be applied to divine life. *Distinction* is virtually a notion which quite clearly denotes the existence of the material world.<sup>265</sup> This is why the predication of *creaturely life* cannot be applied to the reality "before" the creation of the world. It is worth while, therefore, to ponder a little further upon Origen's conception of that reality.

Referring to the actual creation of the world Origen portrays it thus:

"...Accordingly, as life became in the Logos so the Logos was in the beginning. And you should know that it is possible to assert that 'In the beginning was the Logos' so that everything be made according to wisdom and the forms of the system of forms which exist in the Logos (ἵνα κατὰ τὴν σοφίαν καὶ τοὺς τύπους τοῦ συστήματος τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ νοημάτων πάντα γίνηται); for I think that, as a house or ship is built or made according to architectural forms (and hence it is said that this house or ship have their beginning in the forms and reasons which exist in the architect) in similar way everything has been made according to the reasons of future beings, which reasons were distinctly articulated

in wisdom by God (οὕτω τὰ σύμπαντα γεγονέναι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ προτρανωθέντας ὑπὸ Θεοῦ τῶν εσομένων λόγους); for "he has made everything in wisdom".<sup>266</sup> And I should say that once God made wisdom who, so to speak, has a soul (κτίσας, ἰν' οὕτως εἰπω, ἐμψυχον σοφίαν ὁ Θεός), allowed individual creatures and matter and species (and I do believe that even their substances) receive their being (πλάσιν) from the forms being in her (ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τύπων).<sup>267</sup>

This is the context in which Origen's affirmation that the "reason" of this world (τὸν περὶ τοῦ κόσμου λόγον), regarded from a worldly point of view, is the "last of corporeals and the beginning of incorporeals" (ὁς λόγος μὲν ἐστὶ τελευταῖος τῶν σωματικῶν, ἀρχὴ δὲ τῶν ἀσωμάτων).<sup>268</sup> Indeed, this "reason" (λόγος), according to which the world came into existence out of the fall, is in itself a creature by virtue of which the *providential* incorporeal creation comes into the closest relation to the *actual* creation which came in existence as a spatio-temporal reality. Thus, it is through the contemplation of this "reason" that the "transitional" point from providential incorporeality to corporeality could be visualized.

So whereas God's former creative act was an "utterance" to his wisdom, the actual world comes into existence after God allowed the Logos to bring into existence the material creation and indeed matter itself. This creation was made according to the "pre-uttered reasons" (προτρανωθέντας λόγους) which came into being with the "providential" creation.

Thus Origen makes a crucial distinction as he discerns between the "former", namely the providential creation and the latter, which is the "constructional" creation the world as a spatio-temporal reality. He persistently makes this distinction throughout his work.

Accordingly, he distinguishes between *ποίησις* and *πλάσις*. The former is used in Genesis 1,26, where God says "Let us make (ποιήσωμεν)

man in our image and likeness". The latter is used in Genesis 2,7, where it is said that God "made (ἐποίησεν) man".<sup>269</sup> This is why in the passage above he refers to the actual creation's coming into existence through the term πλάσις. Accordingly, he distinguishes between *γένεσις* and *γέννησις*. The former pertains to the first making by God whereas the latter pertains to the existence out of the fall.<sup>270</sup> At another point he also makes a similar distinction between *γένεσις* and *κτίσις*, where the latter means the creation of space-time.<sup>271</sup>

In all three cases Origen alludes to his view that the first "act" of God pertains to a reality which is no other than the divine one. Since, therefore, there is no corporeality and time there can be no category of *life* applied to creatures. As he points out, that first making pertains to the "making of the substance" (οὐσίῳσις)<sup>272</sup> of "rational creatures" yet this "making" was "in Wisdom".<sup>273</sup> This is the sense in which wisdom is said to have been created by God as a beginning towards his works.<sup>274</sup> What was actually created in the former creation was a "wisdom" perceived as a "system of apperceptions .. and forms and reasons" according to which "future beings" were made.<sup>275</sup> So "matter and creation and the species ... and the substances" were made "out of the forms which were in wisdom" and those forms were *made*, too.

Thus *ποίησις* and *γένεσις* refer to the providential creation whereas *πλάσις*, *γέννησις*, and *κτίσις* refer to the actual creation of the world. The distinction between these two categories in actual content is this:

The *ποίησις* and *γένεσις* refer to "coming into being out of non-being"<sup>276</sup> as the creation of the "essence" or what Origen calls as the "substantification" (οὐσίῳσις)<sup>277</sup> of rational *natures* (and not of individual rational creatures). This means that what was created was the *essence* of rational natures and not any individual hypostases or persons. Thus when Job as well as David say "your hands have *made* me

and *fashioned* me" (αἱ χεῖρες σου ἐποίησάν με καὶ ἐπλάσάν με)<sup>278</sup> there is a "great doctrine"<sup>279</sup> suggested by the notions of *ποίησις* and *πλάσις* on which, however, Origen explicitly states that does not wish to elaborate.<sup>280</sup>

It is quite significant to remark how Origen treats the question of what "essence" is. When he comes to explain this point, all he does is to expound the views of philosophers of various schools of thought. Thus, he gives an account of "what essence is" according to either those who maintain that the reality of incorporeal things is primary<sup>281</sup> or according to "those who hold that the reality of incorporeal things is secondary and that of corporeal things is primary".<sup>282</sup> He provides a quite detailed account of both those definitions of "essence".

It is quite characteristic, however, that he does not articulate any view of his own of this question -and certainly this is not incidental. On the contrary, it is indicative of his perception of rational creatures as only conceptually (and not actually) consisting of a corporeal and an incorporeal element. When he speaks of a providential creation his perception of it has nothing to do with any Platonic view of some pre-existing "spiritual world". If this was his view, he would have no difficulty in enunciating it. Subsequently he could have employed that definition of "essence" which stems from a virtually Platonic perception of the world and its origin. But he did not employ either a idealistic or a materialistic or an Aristotelian view<sup>283</sup> of what essence is and he obviously wishes to stay impartial in respect of these definitions of "essence". The reason for this is that a certain definition of "essence" is directly related (actually it stems from) a certain conception of the world and its origin, be it created or uncreated. That Origen here wishes to hold aloof and not to take on anyone of these views exactly denotes that his conception of creation had nothing to do with those of the pagan schools of thought. In order to explicate his own perception of "essence"

he had to provide previously an detailed account of his conception of what he held as "mystical" doctrine about the soul. This is exactly what he consciously wished not to do and actually did not do. And this is why he states that "the doctrine about essence is a matter great and difficult to contemplate" (πολύς δ' ὁ περὶ τῆς οὐσίας λόγος καὶ δυσθεώρητος).<sup>284</sup>

In any case Origen's view is that "essence" that was *made* as God "found substance uncreated" (τόν Θεόν ἀγέννητον ευρόντα τὴν οὐσίαν)<sup>285</sup> whereas God himself is "beyond substance" (ὑπερέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας),<sup>286</sup> he is "beyond mind and substance" (ἐπέκεινα νοῦ καὶ οὐσίας)<sup>287</sup> and "God does not participate to substance at all" (ἀλλ' οὐδ' οὐσίας μετέχει ὁ Θεός).<sup>288</sup>

So when Origen speaks of "essence" of God he just uses this term in a loose sense. There is no "oscillation", as H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti allege<sup>289</sup> attributing to Origen a Platonic attitude, and regarding that a similar to that of Philo and Clement. Origen is unequivocal on this question and has enunciated his view in many parts of his work. This is not the only point where he employs a current philosophical category in a loose sense -once, however, he has explicated his strict views on a question. This is what he does with the notion of "eternal death", or "infinite time" or "infinite souls"<sup>290</sup> or even when he speaks of the Logos as "having soul" whereas he is explicit in his view that the term "soul" applies only to human beings. These figures are not rare in Origen's works; this is why expressions like "as it were" (οἷον) or "so to say" (ὡς οὕτως εἶπω) are not rare either. Thus when he articulates the radical transcendence of God from any created nature, he says that "the essence of God is distinguished from any created nature" -yet this affirmation (as usually in such cases) agains begins with the expression "as it were" (οἷον ἀφιστάντι τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν γεννητῶν).<sup>291</sup> In any case, the assertion that Origen "oscillates" about the relation of God to "essence" is not correct. Even at the point where he states that the

doctrine about essence is "great and difficult to contemplate", the phrase begins with the affirmation that "God does not participate in essence".<sup>292</sup>

The crucial point which has eluded H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti is this: It is one thing to speak of the *substance of human nature* but it is quite another to speak of the *substance of an individual human being*. The former came into being out of non-being with the providential creation. The latter (namely, the substance of individual persons) appears *only* with the actual material creation. Origen is quite explicit that what was created in the actual creation was not only "matter" (ὕλη) and "species" (εἶδη) and "individual beings" (οὔσι) but also it was the *substances* of these individual beings -and Origen takes particular care to *stress* this point through the expression ἐχὼ δέ ἐφίστημι εἰ καὶ τὰς οὐσίας.<sup>293</sup>

The crucial conclusion out of this statement is this: The substance of *human nature* (which involves no individuality whatsoever) was created in the providential creation. *This* is why the providential creation is stated as incorporeal. For, even today, speaking of "human nature", who would possibly assert that this is either something *personal* or *corporeal*? On the other hand, the substance of individual rational creatures came into being only with the actual creation. This is why what is *personal* is also *corporeal*, as we shall further argue later in this chapter.

This analysis makes clear why Origen, speaking of "essence", does not take the Platonic on the question -in spite of the fact that *created* "incorporeality" is affirmed as prior to created corporeality. To him the substance of an individual person is not *prior* to it, as a Platonist would assert, according to a doctrine of some "pre-existing spiritual world". This substance comes into being *simultaneously* with the actual creation of a personal spatio-temporal creature.<sup>294</sup> Whereas there is

"substance of human nature"<sup>295</sup> since the very beginning of creation, it is only with the material creation that the notion of "substance of an individual person" begins to make sense. This is the crucial point which has eluded all, without a single exception at all, those who make assertions about Origen's conception of creation.

Beyond that, what Origen seems to find in common with the secular philosophical definitions of "essence" which he expounds, is that a fundamental characteristic of "essence" is the "unchangeability" of it.<sup>296</sup> This is exactly what does not pertain to rational creatures according to Origen's views. His view is that indeed rational creatures possess something of their origin, namely they possess an incorporeal element in themselves. But this in no sense is understood as pre-existing in itself as it is now, namely as an individual personality. Creation of individual beings means that they appear as *individuals* possessing both a material and an immaterial element. Matter in itself is not held to be evil;<sup>297</sup> it is rather held to be a symptom of the existence of evil and it came into being just because evil appeared. On the other hand, the "incorporeal" of rational creatures does constitute a kind of affinity with God, yet there is a substantial difference: This incorporeal is *created* whereas God is uncreated.

The difference between Origen's conception of *essence* and the secular ones lies exactly in the distinction made above. If a rational creature was but a "soul" clothed with a body (in a merely Platonic sense) then it would be simple to search for the essence in the self-existing "persona incorporeal" or (as many scholars attribute Origen) the personal "spirit". Yet the case is not like that at all. A rational creature is an *inseparable* entity and not an incorporeal spirit (least of all a pre-existing one) clothed with a body. And the essence of its existence does not lie in any unchangeable incorporeal personality (there is no room for such a notion in Origen's thought) but it the

*relation* of the rational creature to God -as we shall discuss shortly below.

In the *Princ* there is a passage which expresses Origen's views on this subject:

"God has created two universal natures, a visible, that is a bodily one, and an invisible one, which is incorporeal. These two natures each undergo their own different changes. The invisible, which is also the rational nature, is changed through the action of the mind and will by reason of the fact that it has been endowed with freedom of choice; and as a result of this it is found existing sometimes in the good and sometimes in its opposite. The bodily nature, however, admits of a change in substance, so that God the Artificer of all things, in whatever work of design or construction or restoration he may wish to engage, has at hand the service of this material for all purposes, and can transform and transfer it into whatever forms and species he desires, as the merits of things demand. It is to this, clearly, that the prophet points when he says, 'God who makes and transforms all things' (Amos, 5,8)."<sup>298</sup> This passage can be deemed as authentic as there is a similar affirmation in the same work preserved in Greek: "God created a nature which is indestructible and akin to him" (ἀφθαρτον γὰρ φύσιν πεποίηκε καὶ αὐτῷ συγγενή).<sup>299</sup>

This is also a point where Origen's thought is completely different from the Gnostic one. The incorporeal of rational creatures is "akin" to God but not "consubstantial" with him. Such a distinction would be inconceivable for the Gnostics. This incorporeal in the world is "changed" and it is not regarded as "intact" throughout the "episode" of its mixture with matter. This would be unacceptable to the Gnostics. Finally, this incorporeal was "made" as well as matter; there is no question about the "reality" of the material world, which is regarded as true as the state before the fall was. In a Gnostic's view, "true being" is



only that of the transcendent world. On these three topics, Origen's thought is entirely different from that of the Gnostics. H. Puech regards these three topics as the fundamental characteristics of Gnostic thought.<sup>300</sup> Irenaeus<sup>301</sup> states that, to the Valentinians, the "pneumatic generation" (τό κύημα πνευματικόν) is and remains *consubstantial* with the "Mother", the feminine entity which is an Aeon of the pleroma (ομοούσιον υπάρχον τῇ μητρί). Clement of Alexandria deals with these views of consubstantiality of God and man in Gnosticism in the *Stromateis*.<sup>302</sup>

Indeed Origen affirms that "incorporeal nature" was "made" by God.<sup>303</sup> In view of this he states that not only "corporeals" but also "incorporeals" are "made" (γεγονότων).<sup>304</sup>

Thus he avers that both incorporeal and corporeal nature are susceptible of change; the former changes in mind (namely moral quality) whereas the latter changes in quality of matter. He also affirms that creatures are susceptible to change by virtue of the very fact that they have been *created*. Hence, when Origen speaks of "creation" of "essence" (ουσίωσις) he does not actually mean that there was any entirety of personal individuals that was made. This latter is understood to have taken place only when the actual creation came into existence.

Thus the *παράσις*, *γέννησις*, and *κτίσις* refer to the actual creation of the world, namely to the creation of rational creatures having a *personal identity* and a *life of their own*, being in a "fallen" status and completely distinguished from the divine life.

Therefore, what lives before the actual creation is God's Wisdom herself, her body being "multi-embroidered" with "precious stones" which are living, as they are in the living body of Christ. What lives after the actual creation are those fallen "stones" having acquired corporeal bodies and having been "substantified" as *individual personalities*. There is nothing in common between those two "lives".

For the former is life of God, namely life *in* Wisdom, while the latter is the fallen life of creatures, the life *out* of God. The "chasm" between divinity and creation is a radical one. The world is absolutely "out" of the divinity<sup>305</sup> and there is no Plotinian notion about the world as an "effluence" of divinity.

The point which Origen makes, namely that creaturely "spiritual nature" is not "homousios to the uncreated nature" of God<sup>306</sup> is a crucial one. For this is exactly a point where Origen rejects Platonic and Neoplatonic views, according to which incorporeal nature is one and therefore there is a sort of continuity from the highest down to the lowest modes of existence. Indeed Origen here reiterates his conviction of the radical "chasm" between God and what is "created". Hence his conception of the fall is not as simplistic as a notion of pre-existing spirits which have "fell" and therefore been clothed with material bodies.

If there is a notion of Platonic "dualism" here (namely a dualism of spirit-matter) it is only an intellectual not an actual one. Origen was fully aware of the Platonic views on the subject and he does not fail to stress his views in contrast to them; although he does not elaborate on his own conception of the fall, he stresses its difference from the Greek views:

"Our Lord and Saviour indeed alludes to yet another world, which is difficult to describe and depict in actual truth, beyond this visible one. For he says, 'I am not of this world',<sup>307</sup> and the words 'I am not of this world', suggest that he was of some other world. We have already said that it is difficult for us to explain this other world; and for this reason, that if we did so, there would be a risk of giving some men the impression that we are affirming the existence of certain imaginary forms which the Greeks call 'ideas'. For it is certainly foreign to our mode of reasoning to speak of an incorporeal world that exists solely in

the mind's fancy or the substantial region of mind; and how men could affirm that the Saviour came from thence or that the saints will go thither<sup>308</sup> I do not see".<sup>309</sup>

Origen totally rejects the Platonic dualism; rational beings, as individual personalities, are conceived as entities having a corporeal body as well as something incorporeal in them; yet these beings are entities and this separation is nothing more than an intellectual portrayal of their nature. Origen stresses that "it is only in idea and thought that a material substance is separable from them, and that though this substance seems to have been produced for them or after them, yet never have they lived or do they live without it;"; for "life without a body is found in the Trinity alone".<sup>310</sup>

It is in the light of these analyses that statements in the *Princ*, referred to rational creatures, such as "All these are incorporeal in respect of their proper nature, but though incorporeal were nevertheless made"<sup>311</sup> should be understood. G. Butterworth, in his translation of *Princ*, considers this passage quite isolated from any other context in order to draw the conclusion that Origen held a notion of an original spiritual world of rational creatures. As for the above mentioned passage where Origen explicitly rejects such a view, he considers that it has just been modified by Rufinus.<sup>312</sup> It is obvious that he is totally unaware of Origen's notion that those "precious stones" which are "ornaments" in the body of the "multi-decorated" wisdom are also named as "creatures"; for it is Origen himself who says that "God is invisible and there are some creatures invisible, that is to say intelligible (νοητά)"<sup>313</sup> using the same term Paul uses in Rom.1,20, namely "the invisible things of God". It is in the same sense that Origen refers to "God and the invisible things of God",<sup>314</sup> explaining his fundamental view that "what is signified by the term 'invisible' is incorporeal".<sup>315</sup> Again into the Latin rendering of the *Princ*, one can trace the authentic views

of Origen:

"It is proved by many declarations throughout the whole of scripture that the universe was created by God and that there is no substance which has not received its existence from him; which refutes and dismisses the doctrines falsely taught by some, that there is a matter which is co-eternal with God or that there are unbegotten souls, in whom they would have it that God implanted not so much the principle of existence as the quality and rank of their life."<sup>316</sup>

Thus, in spite of Origen's distinction between corporeality and incorporeality, he holds that the very nature of rational beings has an existential unity and no notion of dualism can be applied to their existence *per se*; there is only an intellectual conception of incorporeality applied to the rational creatures and it stems from the very conception of Origen about the fall. Indeed it is not rarely that he states or suggests that this incorporeality, applied to rational creatures in the above mentioned sense, is an element of a certain "affinity" between God and the world.<sup>317</sup>

Thus all rational beings, regardless of their rank of life, have the same origin, that is the divine reality. Once they were created they were dispersed in the various ranks of life, yet all of them have something in common. This common is the "rational essence" (ἡ λογικὴ οὐσία), part of which is human nature, which is called "soul".<sup>318</sup> Thus rational being is "an existence which is rationally capable of feeling and movement".<sup>319</sup> Origen also provides a definition of what rational creatures are in respect to God: they are living beings which receive commands from God; for commands are not usually given to any but living beings.<sup>320</sup> Origen actually believes that "rational creatures are of one nature",<sup>321</sup> for "things which have one definition have also undoubtedly the same substance".<sup>322</sup>

It is then this incorporeal in rational beings that allows them a

kind of *communication* with God through the Logos.<sup>323</sup> In the final analysis the element which constitutes the personal identity of the rational creatures lies exactly in this relation with God. Their bodies change as "it is possible for matter, which stand below all qualities, to change quality (δυνατόν αμείβειν ποιότητας τήν υποκειμένην πάσαις ποιότησιν ὕλην".<sup>324</sup> The quality of bodies of rational creatures change according to their merits, yet what remains unchangeable is their faculty of communication with God through the Logos, as they are endowed with rationality; it is through this "incorporeal" of theirs that they communicate to God.

It should be noted that Origen's apprehension of the personal identity of rational creatures does not at all imply any actual existence of the afore mentioned dualism (matter-spirit) in the rational creature itself in some kind of Platonic sense. The personality of rational creatures is not compound but it is single; the quality of their body reflects the quality (namely, the moral mood or disposition) of their incorporeal; and vice versa. This means that the body has a certain quality, because this is the moral quality of the incorporeal; if a rational creature is a daemon, it is not the quality of his body but the quality of his mind that will dictate the morality of the actions of this person. Thus it is not the incorporeal itself (understood abstractly, as an independent individual existence) but it is the faculty of the creature in his relation to God that constitutes his personal identity. The quality of mind changes; the quality of body changes, too, and it changes accordingly; what remains unchangeable is the capacity of this entirety "mind-body" to stand in a dialectical relation to God, to be distinct in the eyes of God as an individual personality and to be free to obey or disobey God's will. There can be no notion of personal incorporeal mind existing in itself in this fallen state; mind existing in itself into the world is an intellectual abstraction, not a reality in itself. Mind does not

live in itself either "before" or after the fall. For after the fall it is the rational creature, as an inseparable being, who lives; while "before" the fall it is God's Wisdom who lives,<sup>325</sup> in either case mind is regarded as participating, as it were, in life; yet it is not in any case regarded as living itself as an independent incorporeal being. Speaking of "soul", Origen points out that this is the state of mind applying to human being only; thus he explains that speaking of "man" he means "a soul using a body".<sup>326</sup> Yet it is himself who stresses that this is only a figure of speech not related to any Platonic notion whatever; for this figure of speech is just a "metaphor".<sup>327</sup> Indeed, in *commJohn*, he states that a human being is an inseparable whole; although "soul" and "body" are regarded as "contrary in nature" (φύσει ἐναντία) yet human being is actually "one unity" (κράσιν μίαν).<sup>328</sup> This "unity" of human nature applies even to Christ himself who is stated as "altogether assumed human nature" (πάντῃ ἀνθρώπου ἀνελθόναι).<sup>329</sup>

What constitutes the personal identity of a rational creature is to be found in its *relation* to God rather, than in this creature itself regarded as isolated and in itself.

This is why Origen states: "Moreover when the scripture says that God created all things "by number and measure",<sup>330</sup> we shall be right in applying the term "number" to rational creatures or minds for this very reason that they are so many as can be provided for and ruled and controlled by the providence of God;<sup>331</sup> God "made all things by number and measure; for to God there is nothing either without end or without measure",<sup>332</sup> "every created thing, therefore, *is distinguished in God's sight* by its being confined within a certain number and measure, that is, either number in the case of rational beings or measure in the case of bodily matter."<sup>333</sup> Rational creatures are distinguished in the sight of God; this happens "from the time their personality first emerged".<sup>334</sup>

Thus the very fact of the individual *personal relation* to God

constitutes the personal identity of a rational creature. This is why Origen considers "to receive commands from God"<sup>335</sup> as a definition of a rational being in itself. This personal and concrete dialectical relation to God, as a fact, is what actually remains constant and unchangeable throughout the alterations of rational creatures (both in their incorporeal and corporeal nature) from one "aeon" to another. For if a conception of "relation" is applied to a certain being this is mainly to be understood as its relation to God. In the *se/Ez*, Origen enunciates this conception thus: "Regarding our birth in flesh, we have both a father and a mother. But a father or mother is not a such of the soul; for it is God alone who is the creator and father of the soul. This is what God teaches saying that 'All souls are mine',<sup>336</sup> and each soul has its own hypostasis and stands for reasons of its own and not [for reasons] of anyone else (καί εκάστη ψυχὴ ἰδίαν υπόστασιν ἔχει, ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ λόγῳ ἰσταμένη, καί οὐκ ἐν ἄλλῳ)."<sup>337</sup>

It is the very fact that God has established a personal relation to each rational being that endows it with its individuality, which is thereafter free to come in a dialectical relation either to God or to other rational beings.

This is the answer that Origen offers as a result of his fundamental view that the rational creature is an inseparable entity, in which the distinction between body and matter are just intellectual conceptions. A rational being is in itself indivisible, single and not compound. Thus what is intellectually described as "incorporeal" of a rational creature may in no way be understood to live personally in itself independently from the body.

**The concept of world.** There are serious reasons, which render the study of Origen's concept of cosmos an indispensable presupposition for the study of his concept of time. As we shall see in the proper place of this treatise, the concept of time in itself is defined in close

correlation to that of cosmos. So, it is reasonable to expect that some fundamental characteristics of time will be possible to be defined in correspondence to similar characteristics of the cosmos; for instance, if the cosmos is considered as "eternal", then time should be regarded as "eternal" too, in the sense of "endless duration". Besides, it has been argued that Origen holds the notion of a "world" "before" time (though it is very doubtful if the term "before" can make any sense in this case); this is obviously a Platonic notion. But, again, it is exactly a thorough examination of the concept of cosmos in Origen's thought that will show whether or not we can, in any case, speak of "cosmos" without necessarily implying the coexistence of time; that is, we should inquire whether the term "cosmos" can make any sense in absence of time. It is exactly in this context that Origen's idea of "restoration of all" (which also stands in the core of Origen's concept of time) should be placed in order to be properly comprehended.

The analysis of Origen's concept of time would be either impossible or misleading, unless it has been clear how Origen conceives and illustrates the concept of "cosmos" as well as what is the content (or, contents) he attributes to it. It is therefore fundamental that, before any discussion of Origen's time, an elucidation of his concept of "cosmos" has taken place.

The study of Origen's theology shows that he was fully conscious of the crucial and fundamental importance of the concept of cosmos; this becomes apparent by the fact that he very often concentrates his analysis upon the meaning of the term "cosmos"; in fact there are many points in his work where he tries to illustrate (sometimes in quite an extended way) the meaning of "cosmos" and offers his views of the actual content of the term.

The "Commentary on Genesis" is that work of Origen's which would offer the most systematic analysis of his views on the question; it



would be reasonable to expect that it was there that Origen has discussed the subject in the clearest and most integrated way; but this work is lost. This is indeed a serious gap in Origen's extant work. For, in his exegesis of the First Chapter of Genesis, he had provided extensively and clearly his views about cosmos. This is not just a conjecture; it is Origen himself in certain points of his work who states that he has fully discussed his views of creation in the work.<sup>338</sup>

Nevertheless he states his views of the meaning of "cosmos" in other points of his extant work; for the purpose of our subject here these references should be regarded as satisfactory; for our main purpose here is not the discussion of Origen's whole Cosmology, but only that of the meaning of cosmos.

In Origen's view the term cosmos, as found in the Scripture, is a "homonym" (ὁμωνυμία). In his *commGen* Origen explicitly states that "... the word (sc. "cosmos") should be examined as a homonym" (τὴν ῥῆξιν ὡς ὁμώνυμον ἐξετάζεσθαι).<sup>339</sup> It is a task of the interpreter to attribute to the terms of the Scripture each time that meaning which maintains the reverence to the grandeur of God.<sup>340</sup> Origen argues that those who have neglected the fact that the term cosmos is a homonym have committed the fault of making most irreverent assertions about God.<sup>341</sup>

So he sets forth the rule according to which a specific content should each time be attributed to the term cosmos: This rule is reverence for God and the avoidance of "malicious interpretations" (μοχθηρῶν ἐκδοχῶν).<sup>342</sup> So, in interpreting the passage of the Scripture I John, 5, 19, "The world is lying in the power of evil", we should assert that by the term "world" John refers only to "the earthly and human affairs" (τῶν περὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων); for if someone thinks that the term refers to "the system of heaven and earth and those contained in them" he would be led to the most impertinent and irreverent assertion about God, namely, that the sun and the moon and the stars "lie in the

evil" although they just perform a regular movement by order of God.<sup>343</sup> Accordingly, the scriptural passage in John,1,29 "This is the lamp of God who bears the sin of the world" refers to "earthly places" (περίγειοις τόποις) and only those who "ignore the homonym" (διὰ τὴν ἀγνοίαν τῆς ὁμωνυμίας) would "stupidly argue" (φιλονεικούντες ἡλιθίως) that here the term "world" would have a broader meaning.<sup>344</sup> Again, in the passage II Cor.5,19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" the term "world" refers only to the earthly and human reality and not "to those existing in the whole world" (περί τῶν ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ).<sup>345</sup>

In *commJohn*, it is once more stated that he is fully conscious of the fact that there are many meanings of the term cosmos (ἐκ τῆς "Κόσμος" φωνῆς) in the Scripture,<sup>346</sup> and in *commMatt* he again undertakes the task to clarify the various meanings of this "homonym" by selecting and interpreting several passages of the Scripture where this term appears. Quoting Matthew 18,7-14, "Woe to the world for the temptations to sin", Origen states his intention: "Intelligere autem aliquid poterimus, si congregemus scripturarum exempla in quibus nominatur mundus",<sup>347</sup> and so he does by referring to numerous passages of the Scripture where the term "cosmos" appears. So, "one should not think that it is the same thing to speak simply of the world or of the world of the heaven or of the world of Esther".<sup>348</sup>

The conclusion in that point is that the usual meaning of cosmos in the Scripture is not that of the "system consisting of heaven and earth" (τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς σύστημα)<sup>349</sup> but "only the earthly place" (ὁ περίγειος μόνος τόπος).<sup>350</sup> Sometimes the meaning of cosmos is even narrower alluding just to that part of the earth which is inhabited by people, that is the "ecoumene" (οικουμένη).<sup>351</sup> In *Cels* it is stated that it is usual (ἐθος) to use the term cosmos in the Scripture meaning just "the earth".<sup>352</sup>

We see then that there are various meanings that Origen

attributes to the term cosmos: It may mean the visible whole which consists of "heaven and earth",<sup>353</sup> namely the visible firmament consisting "of the moon and the sun and the heavenly bodies called 'planets' or wanderers"<sup>354</sup> or just the earth (περίγειος τόπος) or that part of the earth which is inhabited by people (οικουμένη) or even the human environment itself.<sup>355</sup> However, one should constantly bear in mind that all these various meanings are employed for the sake of the interpretation of the Scripture; in interpreting a certain passage, one should employ that meaning of cosmos which would not in any case lead to irreverent implications about the grandeur or the goodness of God; any interpretation of cosmos which would put the grandeur or the goodness of God in question is rejected and another meaning of the term (either broader or narrower) should be adopted in order to interpret a particular passage.

It is therefore obvious that all these interpretations of the term "cosmos" are adopted in order to serve a purpose which is primarily a theological one. The question which then arises is this: Did Origen hold a notion about the actual content of "cosmos" which would be a "natural" one? That is, did Origen have a personal natural view of the world, a theory independent from the circumstantial need to interpret a particular passage of the Scripture? Did he hold a picture of the (asserted as) "objective" structure of the world? Had he a theory about the cosmic structure that would serve to him as a basis for the deployment of his Cosmology itself?

As a matter of fact, beyond all the specific meanings of the term "cosmos" which are adopted for the sake of the exegesis, Origen held a clear personal conception of "cosmos"; this conception is exposed both in *Princ* and in many of his works preserved in Greek.

In the Second Book of the *Princ*, Origen attempts "to inquire into the meaning of the actual term 'world'; for it is a term which is

frequently shown in the holy scriptures to possess different significations."<sup>356</sup> In fact he makes a systematic inquiry into the meaning of the term; he does not fail to stress that the very name cosmos does not only mean the world but it also (and originally) means "ornament" and this meaning is alluded in certain points of the Old Testament.<sup>357</sup> It is stated that in the Scripture cosmos means our earth together with its inhabitants; it is also pointed up that this visible universe which consists of heaven and earth is also called a world, as Paul says "The fashion of this world will pass away".<sup>358</sup>

Continuing the "topography" of his world, Origen makes a step further: He states that there is another heaven, of another broader sphere; this heaven contains and encloses that earth which Jesus in the gospel promises to the "meek" and "gentle"<sup>359</sup> and this sphere is called in the holy scriptures the "good land" and the "land of the living". So, Origen's view is that there is another "heaven" and another "earth" besides this visible firmament. But this place is only one, namely the "highest" among those which constitute Origen's world; this is an abiding place for the pious and blessed, in as it were a "good land" and a "land for the living", which the "meek" and gentle will receive for an inheritance. Nonetheless there are also other places in the world. He explains that by the term "world" he finally means "all that is above the heavens, or in them, or on the earth, or in what is called the lower regions, or any places that exist anywhere; together with the beings who are said to dwell in them. All this is called the world."<sup>360</sup>

The conclusion then is that "the entire universe of things that exist, both celestial and supercelestial, earthly and infernal may be spoken of in general way as a single perfect world, within which or by which those other worlds that are in it must be supposed to be contained".<sup>361</sup>

This is Origen's fundamental view and can be traced throughout

his work in Greek, where there are references to various "spaces" in the world. In *Cels* he refers to "most pure celestial spaces of the world" (ἐν τοῖς καθαρωτάτοις τοῦ κόσμου χωρίοις ἐπουρανίοις) and to "even purer supercelestial ones" (ἢ καὶ τοῖς τούτων καθαρωτέροις υπερουρανίοις).<sup>362</sup> He also refers to the "aether and those places which are located above it" (ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ τοῖς ἀνωτέρω αὐτοῦ τόποις).<sup>363</sup> In *homJer* it is pointed out that the "kingdom of God" "comes from the better spaces" (ἀπὸ τῶν κρείττονων χωρίων),<sup>364</sup> and in *commJohn* it is stressed that when we say that the gospel has been given to the whole world, by "world" is meant not only the "earthly place" (τῷ περιγείῳ τόπῳ) but "the whole system consisting of heaven and earth or heavens and earth" (τῷ συστήματι τῷ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ἢ ἐξ οὐρανῶν καὶ γῆς).<sup>365</sup>

He also refers to those regions which are "lower" than the human one speaking of "down in hades or in any space like that" (ἐν ᾧδου κάτω ἢ τινι τοιούτῳ χωρίῳ),<sup>366</sup> but also those spaces that are "up" are numerous and there are differences among them, too.<sup>367</sup> In *commMatt* Origen refers to the "heavenly spaces" (οὐράνιοι τόποι)<sup>368</sup> and it is quite significant that he uses the term in Plural; similarly in *seIPs* he refers to the "dimmer spaces" (σκυθρωποτέροις χωρίοις)<sup>369</sup> and uses Plural too; in the same work he speaks of "diverse worlds" (τοὺς ποικίλους κόσμους) which "contain the diverse bodies of rational creatures" (τὰ διάφορα σώματα τῶν λογικῶν).<sup>370</sup> Accordingly, in *expProv* he speaks of all "rational natures" (λογικῶν φύσεων) which "are sorted in various worlds and bodies in proportion to their existential state" (διαίρουμένων κόσμοις καὶ σώματι κατὰ ἀναλογίαν τῆς καταστάσεως).<sup>371</sup> This is the sense in which Origen speaks of "bodies, which comprise the world"<sup>372</sup> making the distinction between "life in flesh and blood" and life "in aetheral body".<sup>373</sup> The latter sort of body is understood to be that of creatures "resurrected"; they are held to live in "spaces" (χωρίοις) which are of most pure aether and regarding their thinness they are more translucent than light itself (καί

ἀεπτότητι φωτός διαυγαστέροις).<sup>374</sup> Their "matter" itself is one, yet its quality is determined by the moral status of creatures. This is why Origen speaks of "aetheral places" (αιθερίους τόπους).<sup>375</sup> Indeed this affirmation constitutes a kind of natural explanation of why these bodies are "not seen": Their material quality (which is proportional to their moral superiority) is so fine that it is "more translucent" than light itself and therefore light cannot help make them be seen by human beings.

The differences among rational creatures of different ranks of life lie in the different degree of their participation to and knowledge of the Logos.<sup>376</sup> Christ nevertheless is present in all the ranks of life as "all rational creatures participate in Christ".<sup>377</sup> Rationality (ὁ λόγος) is what establishes a certain affinity between God and creatures.<sup>378</sup> It is due to rationality (regardless of its degree) that creatures "cannot be regarded as totally alienated from God".<sup>379</sup> Christ, as Logos, descends to all ranks of life<sup>380</sup> and "is present in each rational creature".<sup>381</sup> Indeed "daemons are regarded to have been created by God, not as daemons but in as much as they are rational creatures" (καθὼς λογικοί τινες).<sup>382</sup> The higher a "heaven" is, the closer to the Logos it is held to be. This is the sense in which it is affirmed that Christ is "the king of heavens" and his "kingdom is not a reigning of a part of lower places or of a part of the higher ones, but it is [the kingdom] of all the higher places which have been named as heavens"<sup>383</sup> as he has full domination "not only on one heaven but on all the heavens".<sup>384</sup>

This is the context in which Origen's affirmations about the incarnation of the Logos should be understood. Indeed he speaks of Christ as him who came on the earth "descending not only one heaven but all of them, whatever their number is" (καταβάς οὐχ ἓνα μόνον οὐρανόν, ἀλλὰ πάντας, ὅσοι ποτέ εἰσίν).<sup>385</sup> Although he rejects the opinion about the existence of "seven heavens"<sup>386</sup> he affirms that "the Bible does seem to

teach that there are heavens, perhaps meaning the spheres of the planets of which the Greeks speak or perhaps something else more mysterious."<sup>387</sup> Thus he appeals to Moses who "says that in a divine dream our forefather Jacob had a vision in which he saw a ladder reaching to heaven and angels of God ascending and descending upon it, and the Lord standing still at its top,"<sup>388</sup> perhaps in this story of the ladder Moses was hinting at these truths or at yet more profound doctrines. Philo also composed a book about this ladder, which is worthy of intelligent and wise study by those who wish to find the truth."<sup>389</sup>

This statement, as well as others similar to this, should be understood in the light of Origen's conception of the world as comprising different particular spaces or particular "worlds".

This is exactly the context in which a particular point in the *Princ*, should be understood in order to avoid misunderstandings of his authentic views: Origen asserts<sup>390</sup> that Jesus "alludes to yet another world, which is difficult to describe and depict in actual truth, beyond this visible one. For he says, 'I am not of this world,'<sup>391</sup> and the words, 'I am not of this world', suggest that he was of some other world". At that point it is also stated that this notion can in no way be related to the Greek one about a spiritual "world of ideas". What he implies is that Jesus, in descending to the human rank of life, has passed through the higher worlds; this is why in the Latin version of the *Princ* it is stated that the "world", which Jesus speaks about, "excels in quality and glory but is nevertheless contained within the limits of this world".<sup>392</sup> obviously alluding to the topmost rank of life, in which Christ is understood to reign, too.<sup>393</sup>

The term used to denote these particular "spaces" which comprise the whole "single"<sup>394</sup> world is χωρίον; this is derived from χώρος which means "space"; thus χωρίον means a "particular space". It is quite remarkable that the same term χώρος is used in modern science and

particularly in the mathematical theory of spaces. It is significant to note that Origen has a very clear conception of what the "differences" among these particular "spaces" are: He does not conceive these differences in terms of spatial distance; these spaces are radically separated each from another yet their "distance" is a *qualitative* not a geometrical one. If those spaces are to be examined only in terms of geometrical distance, then there is no actual distance among them; all these spaces are here, on the earth. Origen clearly holds this notion; in the Latin version of the *Princ* he is presented as appealing to Clement of Rome who "speaks of other parts of the world which none of our people can reach, nor can any of those who live there cross over to us; and these parts themselves he called 'worlds', when he says, 'The ocean is impassible to men, and the worlds beyond it are governed by the same ordinances of God the Ruler'".<sup>395</sup>

This passage has been preserved only in a Latin version, yet we can accept it as rendering the authentic views of Origen's. For we can find this assertion in a Greek passage which expresses his views more clearly; indeed in the passage above, though Origen appeals to Clement, it is not absolutely clear that the latter was regarding the "distance" among the "worlds" as not a spatial one.<sup>396</sup> Origen nevertheless is categorical on this point; in *se/Ez* he explicitly states that those other worlds are "on the earth": "There certainly are other worlds on the earth and this can also be shown from our knowledge (μαθήματα); for it is also Clement who says, 'The ocean is impassible to men and those worlds beyond it are governed by the same ordinances of the Ruler'".<sup>397</sup>

So, although Origen's world is one and "single",<sup>398</sup> it is supposed to be consisted of "particular" worlds. What nevertheless should be stressed is this: Origen is primarily interested not in these particular "worlds", as "places", but in the "inhabitants" of these worlds; the articulation of his view in *Princ* is quite eloquent: "The entire



constitution of the world is various and diverse; for it consists of rational beings, and others more divine, and of bodies of different kinds;... then secondly of places, such as heaven or the heavens..."<sup>399</sup> The "places" are only "secondly" regarded; what is significant is the "hierarchy" of the creatures: "In this world some creatures are said to be supercelestial, that is placed in the more blessed abodes and clothed with the brighter and more heavenly bodies; and among these many differences are revealed".<sup>400</sup> Using the language of I Cor.15.40, he avers that "Some creatures, however, are called "earthly", and among these, too, there are no small differences, for some are barbarians, others Greeks, and of the barbarians some are wilder and fiercer, whereas others are more gentle..."<sup>401</sup> "There are also certain invisible powers, to which the management of things upon earth is entrusted; and we must believe that among these, too, no small differences exist, just as is found to be the case among men. The apostle Paul indeed intimates that there are also certain "infernal" powers and among these in like manner a condition of variety must undoubtedly be looked for".<sup>402</sup>

Therefore, when Origen refers to the "world", he primarily has in mind and wants to indicate the entirety of rational creatures of this world. "These are who dwell 'in heaven and on earth and under the earth"<sup>403</sup> the three terms indicating the entire universe".<sup>404</sup>

Hence, although Origen is very clear in expounding the "topography" of his world, his main interest is not in the particular "spaces" themselves but in the "inhabitants" of these spaces; each of them is the dwelling place of a particular mode of existence of the rational creatures.

It is again on the Scripture that Origen seeks to ground his notion about the different modes of existence and ranks of life; he appeals to Paul (Col. 1.16) where the apostle speaks of "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers" and since, in the Eph.1.21, the same apostle

speaks of Christ "Who is above every principality and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in the world to come" Origen comes to this conclusion: "Here he (sc. Paul) plainly shows that besides those beings he has mentioned, there are certain others, which may be named indeed in this world, but yet have not on the present occasion been enumerated by him, and which perhaps were not known to any other person; and there are others still, which cannot be named in this world, but will be named in the world to come."<sup>405</sup>

This view, as expressed in the *Princ*, can be found in and confirmed by his works in Greek. In the *commJohn* that Origen refers to the creatures of other spaces and affirms that they have been created by God through the Son.<sup>406</sup> In the same work he states:

"I think therefore that rational beings are classified in various ranks and among them there is the highest one, then the second, then the third and so on, until the last of the whole; it is not within human capability but it is above out nature to say for certain which is the highest rank of life, which is the second and which is the third and to classify them down to the last one."<sup>407</sup> At this point, Origen attempts a classification of the higher rational beings by their names based on scriptural passages where those names are stated. Thus he discerns these beings in "gods",<sup>408</sup> "thrones", "dominions", "principalities", "powers".<sup>409</sup> In *commMatt* Origen speaks of rational beings which are "better than human beings" (τὰ κρείττονα ἀνθρώπων)<sup>410</sup> yet his general view is that "it is only God who knows the various regiments of souls or the powers who are with them" and it is only himself who knows the causes of this classification.<sup>411</sup> In like a manner he refers to the ranks of life below the human one, namely the daemons.<sup>412</sup>

The conclusion is that what is strictly meant by the term "world" is the entirety of particular worlds each of which contains a certain

rank of life; although this cosmos is consisted of many particular "spaces", it is regarded as one, single and perfect.<sup>413</sup> Although this world contains places as well as rational beings, as inhabitants of these places, the main interest of Origen's thought is mainly focussed upon these inhabitants, while the place as a just spatial category is not treated as a subject of prime significance. So Origen's world is actually the entirety of persons, endowed with the capability of free moral action.<sup>414</sup>

**The notions of "not seen" and "invisible":** As regards corporeality, a fundamental distinction made by Origen plays a significant role in the understanding of his thought. He appeals to Paul who says that "All things were created in him (sc. Christ), things in the heaven and things on earth, things visible and invisible, whether thrones, dominions, principalities or powers, all were created through him and in him, and he is before all creatures, and he is the head".<sup>415</sup> Origen's interpretation of that passage is that the term "visible" applies to what is corporeal, while the term "invisible" alludes to what is incorporeal.<sup>416</sup> What he holds to be suggested through the term "invisible" is "a substance in which we can discern neither colour nor shape nor possibility of touch nor size, a substance perceptible to the mind alone which anyone can call whatever he pleases. The Greeks speak of this substance as "asomaton", or incorporeal; but the divine scriptures call it 'invisible' ".<sup>417</sup>

Origen also appeals to another passage of Paul's, namely the II Cor. 4,18, where the distinction between "things which are seen" and "things which are not seen" is made. Origen explains: "Now the things which are invisible are not only not seen, but do not even possess a nature which admits of their being seen; they are what the Greeks have called 'asomata' or incorporeal. But the things of which Paul said, 'they are not seen', possess a nature which admits of their being seen; he is explaining, however, that they are not yet seen by those to whom they

are promised."<sup>418</sup>

It is very often that Origen appeals to these two passages of Paul in order to depict his fundamental view of the distinction between incorporeal and corporeal nature. This is a distinction in terms of which he portrays the radical transcendence of God to the world, and particularly to space. As we shall discuss later, the same perception of God (namely his transcendence) is also articulated through the notion of atemporality in order to depict his being beyond time.

Thus "invisible" is what cannot be seen due to its *essence*, because it is conceived as incorporeal, whereas "not seen" is that which is invisible due to the invisible (to human beings) kind of the matter of its body. Thus what is "not seen" is not immaterial but just made of an aethereal kind of matter which cannot be seen by human beings. What is invisible is incorporeal and beyond any connexion with any matter at all. The term "spiritual" is sometimes used to denote the same perception which suggests the notion of immateriality.<sup>419</sup>

**God is incorporeal:** Origen states that "the apostle declares that God is invisible when he says that Christ is the "image of the invisible God"<sup>420</sup> and it is where he grounds his view that "the substance of the Trinity, which is the beginning and cause of all things, 'of which are all things and through which are all things and in which are all things'<sup>421</sup> must not be believed either to be a body or to exist in a body, but to be wholly incorporeal".<sup>422</sup>

This point is further elaborated thus: "God must not be thought to be in any kind of body, nor to exist in a body, but to be a simple intellectual existence, admitting in himself of no addition whatever, so that he cannot be believed to have in himself a more or less, but is Unity, or if I may so say, Oneness throughout, and the mind and fount from which originates all intellectual existence or mind. Now mind does not need physical space in which to move and operate, nor does it need a

magnitude discernible by the senses, nor bodily shape or colour, not anything else whatever like these, which are suitable to bodies and matter". It is further pointed out that "*only* the species of deity, if I may so call it, has the privilege of existing apart from all material intermixture ... That mind needs no space in which to move according to its own nature".<sup>423</sup> So there is a constant reference to "the invisible and incorporeal God",<sup>424</sup> to the divinity which "in virtue of the majesty of its incorporeal nature, it is confined to no place, in no place"<sup>425</sup> since "the nature of the Trinity is one and incorporeal".<sup>426</sup>

The inference that Origen makes out of his views of the divine nature is that "it is impossible to speak of a part of what is incorporeal or to make any division in it".<sup>427</sup> The significance of this axiom of Origen's will become clear when we shall have discussed his view of corporeality which our next topic.

**The world is material:** As opposed to the divine nature, creation is bound with matter and distinction; so "every created thing ... is distinguished in God's sight by its being confined within a certain number or measure, that is, either number in the case of rational beings or measure in the case of bodily matter" -which makes up the bodies of rational creatures, since all of them "make use of bodies".<sup>428</sup> Further, "a body has a shape".<sup>429</sup> "Every body is made of matter" and has "shape and size and colour" which "are properties of bodies"<sup>430</sup> as well as "To see and to be seen is a property of bodies, which it would certainly not be right to apply either to the Father or to the Son or to the Holy Spirit in their relations with one another. For the Trinity by its nature transcends the limits of vision, although it grants it to those who are in bodies, that is to all other creatures, the property of being seen one by another. But incorporeal, and above all intellectual nature is capable of nothing else but to know and to be known".<sup>431</sup> At that point is clearly pointed out that the expression "those who are in bodies" indicates the

entirety of creatures, that is to say the whole "world", namely the entirety of ranks of life.

This is the context in which the distinction between "things invisible" and "things not seen" should be understood. For as we saw above, Origen considers that those things referred by Paul as "not seen" should be understood as "not *yet* seen" and not as not admitting of being seen at all; that is to say, they are not invisible in their essence.<sup>432</sup> This, in the final analysis, means that we do not see those things, not because they are not capable of being seen, but just because it is the physical structure of ours in this rank of life, namely the human one, which does not allow us to see those things.<sup>433</sup>

We should also notice one more property applied to bodily nature, which is ultimately a property of the world itself. It is asserted that "this nature (sc. the bodily one) is proved to be changeable and convertible by the very condition of its being created -for what was not and began to be is by this very fact shown to be of a changeable nature"<sup>434</sup> and therefore "rational nature is changeable and convertible".<sup>435</sup> Again it is stressed that "since these rational beings, which as we said above were made in the beginning, were made when before they did not exist, by this very fact that they did not exist and then began to exist they are of necessity subject to change and alteration".<sup>436</sup>

Let us then see what the conclusions are out of these affirmations about corporeality.

Since incorporeal nature can be applied to God alone and that "life without a body is found in the Trinity alone"<sup>437</sup> and "bodily nature was created out of nothing after a space of time and brought into being from non-existence"<sup>438</sup> it follows that the entire "world" is a "material" one. We put this term into quotation marks, because "matter" in this case has a broader meaning; for this term is attributed not only to the bodies

being "seen" but also to the "not seen" ones, and yet material -as they are made from a matter of different quality. For according to Origen "material substance possesses such a nature that it can undergo every kind of transformation. When therefore it is drawn down to lower beings it is formed into the grosser and more solid condition of body and serves to distinguish the visible species of this world in all their variety. But when it ministers to more perfect and blessed beings it shines in the splendour of "celestial bodies"<sup>439</sup> and adorns either the "angels of God" or the "sons of the resurrection"<sup>440</sup> with the garments of a "spiritual body".<sup>441</sup> All these beings go to make up the diverse and varied condition of the one world";<sup>442</sup> this is why there is reference to "a variety and diversity of bodies, out of which a world is always composed"<sup>443</sup> and "the diversity of the world cannot exist apart from bodies" and "bodily nature admits of diverse and various changes to such an extent that it can undergo every kind of transformation;".<sup>444</sup>

The conception of the "world" as a material one, is a fundamental one for the overall understanding of Origen's thought<sup>445</sup> and it is possible to corroborate the aforestated points of the *Princ* from passages preserved in Greek.

Thus, in the *commJohn*, Origen refers to the "world" (κόσμος) which has been made "material" (υλικός γενόμενος) saying that it has "various places" (τόπους έχει διαφόρους) some of which are lower as other are higher (εἰεν ἂν τινες τόποι οἱ κάτω καὶ ἄλλοι οἱ ἄνω); yet all these "places" of the world should be regarded as being "down" if they are to be compared to what it is "immaterial and invisible and incorporeal". What Origen does not fail to stress is that the term "down" has not any spatial significance at all (οὐ τοσούτον τόνω) but it denotes the *qualitative* superiority of the invisible and incorporeal nature over the corporeal one (ὅσον τῇ πρὸς τὰ ἀόρατα συγκρίσει). It is therefore in this sense that incorporeal nature (τὰ ἔξω σωμάτων) is stated as being

"above all the heavens"; and in this sense all the creatures of the world should be considered as being inhabitants of a place being "down" even if this "place" is the highest rank of life of the world (καί γάρ πάς ὁ τῶν βλεπομένων νοήτης καί παρερχομένων καί προσκαίρων ἐκ τῶν κάτω ἐστίν, κἀν ἐν συγκρίσει τόπων ἐκ τῶν ανωτάτω τυγχάνη).<sup>446</sup>

We see therefore that in Origen's thought the term "world" is closely connected to corporeality; the term itself, whenever used, implies corporeality of necessity. What follows then is that this term cannot be used in expressions such as "spiritual world" or a "world of incorporeal rational creatures before time"; for what is "spiritual" is of necessity "incorporeal" as what refers to "world" is of necessity "corporeal". "Spiritual" (that is, incorporeal) life is exclusive to the Deity. The terms "world" and "spiritual" (which means "incorporeal") are incompatible with each other and the use of the one excludes the other. This is why the expression "spiritual world" makes no sense in Origen's thought as there is no room for that at all and this is why it is absurd to apply such a term in discussing about Origen's theology.

**The world as καταβολή.** The above-mentioned notion, namely that there is a qualitative difference of the world with respect to incorporeality, is expressed, as we saw, by the word "down".<sup>447</sup> This is a very conscious expression of Origen's; and he articulates it in similar way using the word "katabole (καταβολή)". In the *Princ* appears a treatment of this question:

"Still, there is a point which I do not think we ought lightly to pass by, and that is that the holy scriptures call the foundation of the world by a new and peculiar name, terming it *katabole*. This word is very incorrectly translated into Latin by *constitutio* or foundation, for *katabole* in Greek has rather the significance of *deicere*, that is, to cast downwards, and is, as we have said, incorrectly rendered into Latin by *constitutio*. An example occurs in the gospel according to John, when



the Saviour says 'And there shall be tribulation in those days, such as hath not been from the foundation of the world'.<sup>448</sup> Here "foundation" stands for "katabole", the meaning of which term must be taken to be as we have explained above. Moreover the apostle used the same word in the epistle to the Ephesians, when he says, 'Who chose us before the foundation of the world',<sup>449</sup> for here, too, the "foundation" represents *katabole*, which must be taken to have the same meaning as that given in our interpretation above."<sup>450</sup> The inference out of this discussion is that "A descent ... of all alike form from higher to lower conditions appears to be indicated by the meaning of this word *katabole*".<sup>451</sup>

There would be no question about the authenticity of these views, since the same reasoning appears in the *commJohn* in the exposition of the qualitative difference between corporeality and incorporeality. It is exactly at the place where Origen says that we would, "in a sense" (κατά τι τῶν σηματομένων)<sup>452</sup> term the son of God himself as "world" (κόσμος). As it is discussed in Appendix A, Origen uses the term here as a metaphor in order to indicate the "multi -decorated" wisdom of God. Thus he affirms that this "world" is but the son of God, as "the Logos who is perfectly apart from any matter".<sup>453</sup> It is there that he states that there is nothing in common between that "world", who is "up", to this world which is "down" and which is a 'katabole' (καταβολή) from that world. Origen's opinion is that it is not accidental that "the saints" have "invented this term" (τό ὄνομα πηασάντων) -namely the καταβολή- in order to articulate the conception (διὰ τοιαύτην ἐνίνοιαν) of the world as being "down"; for they would have just said 'before the foundation of the world', yet they did not; they said 'Before the katabole of the world'.<sup>454</sup>

As a matter of fact, the term "katabole" (καταβολή) literally means "thrown down"; hence the term implies a notion of a "fall". This is exactly why this term is most suitable to Origen on a scriptural basis

(though not the only one) to which he alludes when he refers to his conception of the fall, as discussed in this section. The very notion of fall indicates that the material world had a beginning and it is quite clear that the providential creation had a beginning, too. However, Origen's views on this question have been widely miscomprehended. Thus he has been attributed a notion of "eternal creation" in a Platonic sense, namely a notion of a beginningless world of personal spirits, out of which the fall occurred. Our analyses hitherto have made quite clear that such an allegation is entirely wrong. However, since this view is established among scholars and since the question of the "duration" of the world is closely related to Origen's conception of time, we shall make a further *ad hoc* discussion on this subject in the ensuing section in order that no doubt should remain that this allegation about Origen's thought is entirely erroneous.

#### **§4. The notion of "eternity of the world".**

Origen's opinions about the "duration" of creation have been a matter of controversy as a notion of "eternity of the world" has been attributed to him. This is one of the main points on which Origenism (or, what was thought to be Origen's thought) has been condemned.<sup>455</sup> As time in itself is defined in close relation to the world (as we shall discuss in chapter 2), Origen's views of the "duration" of the world affect directly his view of time. Thus the discussion of this question is quite a crucial point for a proper understanding of his concept of time.

In discussing this question we shall take into account the fact that it is Origen himself who stresses the different significations denoted by the tenses in which verbs are used.<sup>456</sup> Thus he is fully conscious of the fact that the Imperfect tense implies what has always existed (like "was"); this is also what he believes about Present tense (as in the case of "is", which denotes the timeless being of wisdom, in the same way

"was" does). As opposed to this structure, Origen is conscious of what the Past tense denotes,<sup>457</sup> namely that it indicates what happened at an indefinite moment in the past.<sup>458</sup> A similar view is found in the Commentary on the Song of Songs: "Because of these, therefore, it is said to the holy body of the Bride: 'How lovely have thy cheeks become!'. And notice that He did not say 'How lovely your cheeks *are*!' -but 'How lovely *have* thy cheeks *become*!' He means to show that *previously they were not* so lovely."<sup>459</sup>

The analyses of Origen's on the actual implications of the term "became" (referring to the Logos in his being "with" God) elucidate his views and show that he was conscious of the actual meaning of the tenses. This is why we have asserted that a philological analysis of Origen's terminology can provide significant conclusions about his authentic views. For when he uses terms, and particularly verbs, he is particularly scrupulous in respect of the philosophical and theological implications entailed out of the way he uses these terms.

In the beginning of this chapter we saw how Origen interprets the scriptural language as well as how he articulates his own views when he refers the divine being itself. Indeed it is he himself who draws the reader's attention upon the use of verbs in the scriptural language and he extensively ponders through such a point of view.<sup>460</sup> Let us then now see how he uses the language himself when he refers to the "creative relation"<sup>461</sup> of God to the world.

Origen's conception of the divine being is quite clear: Wisdom was timelessly in God apart from any creation, be it providential or actual. This means that God in himself is conceived apart from any creation or even *thought* of creation. God created because he *willed* so. Thus Wisdom "was being in herself in no relation to anyone" (σοφία υπάρχουσα ουδεμίαν σχέσιν πρὸς ἑτερόν τινα εἶχεν).<sup>462</sup> This is exactly the state in which God is conceived in himself and not as Creator.

It is out of God's *decision to create* that the son of God , as Wisdom, "became" (γενόμενος) "God's benevolent decision" (ευδοκία) and "wanted" (ηβουλήθη) and "willed" (ηθέλησεν) "to establish a creative relation to future creatures (τά εσόμενα)".<sup>463</sup>

So wisdom was in God's atemporal being; and this wisdom "willed" (ηβουλήθη, ηθέλησεν) "to establish a creative relation" (αναλαβεῖν σχέσιν δημιουργικήν) to what was to come into being out of non-being out of God's *decision*. Besides, Origen refers to a reality where "time cannot be found"<sup>464</sup> and "the third and the fourth conceptions of the Logos did not exist"<sup>465</sup> since there was no creation yet.

It is stated that "God *brought* (ἤγαγεν) everything into being",<sup>466</sup> also "God *made* (εποίησεν) beings out of non beings",<sup>467</sup> "life is the holy Trinity who gives life to everything and it is her who brought (προαγαχούσα) beings into being out of non being",<sup>468</sup> "those who did not exist before (τά μή πρότερον όντα) have been handed to Jesus by the father himself; and it is not said about just some of them, but about all".<sup>469</sup> He refers to all those who "have received their being from God" (υπό γάρ του θεού τό είναι δεξάμενοι),<sup>470</sup> and he states that we are indebted to God because "he made (εποίησεν) us who did not exist before".<sup>471</sup> In *Cels* Origen speaks of "God who made everything"<sup>472</sup> and elsewhere he explains that in this "everything" time should be included too: "If everything has been through him, it is well said that he exists before the aeons; and this is whence we learn that the aeons came into being out of non being".<sup>473</sup> He also states that Christ is said to be the beginning "for it is him who gave (διδούς) being",<sup>474</sup> accordingly, God is said to be "creator, *because* it is he who brought things (γεγονότα) into being out of non being"<sup>475</sup> as "heaven and earth and everything in them have been produced into being out of non being",<sup>476</sup> again he refers to the son saying that "the Son and Logos of God is a hypostasis, it is him who produced (παπαγαχόντα) everything non being into being, by his

wisdom.<sup>477</sup> Accordingly, in *excPs* it is stated that by the term "works" of God (as in Psalm 144,9) David means "the rational natures" (τὸν ἔργα τὰς φύσεις τὰς λογικὰς ἀέχει).<sup>478</sup>

These are not the only points where Origen states his view that it is God who brought everything into being; he expresses his view elsewhere too.<sup>479</sup> What is of interest in these passages is not the view itself,<sup>480</sup> namely that God is the creator, a view which of course is neither unexpected nor an original one.<sup>481</sup> What is significant is the *manner* in which Origen articulates this view. One should notice that he constantly uses Past tense, in order to indicate that the world had a beginning, God was "before" any notion of creation and he created because he "willed" so. Studying the manner in which Origen expresses the notion of creation one can see that there is nothing to indicate or to imply that God has "always" decided to create the world and that he just realized this decision at a "moment" which marks the beginning of the creation. "Coming into being out of non-being" is a notion which *began* to make sense only once God *decided* to create. There was nothing to compel him to do so. He did it out of a "benevolent decision" (εὐδοκία), namely out of *an act of freedom*. This is a point of particular significance and we should elaborate on that a little further.

If Origen held the view that creation has "always" been God's decision, it should imply that the "will" of God to create was existing in him "always" too, even though creation had not yet been realized. But what Origen denotes is quite the opposite. And this is clearly portrayed both explicitly as well as by the way he uses language.

Origen uses Past tense in a most conscious way, namely knowing that this tense indicates that something occurred, something "became" while it did not exist before; Past tense itself implies a kind of progress or change from one situation to a next one. This is why Origen so strongly excludes the use of Past tense when he tries to portray the

life of God Himself; and this is why he stresses that "the Logos did not *become* in the beginning, but he *was* what he was in the ἀρχή".<sup>482</sup> What this means is that if Past tense is used it would imply that there was a reality in which the Logos was not in the ἀρχή, that is in Wisdom.

He knows and has stated<sup>483</sup> that no verb can adequately express the reality when it is referred to the being of God; nevertheless he uses language in such a way that the inevitable inaccuracy should be diminished to the minimum possible; so he deems either the Imperfect tense<sup>484</sup> or the Present tense<sup>485</sup> as more appropriate (or rather, less inaccurate) in order to refer to the being of God Himself. On the other hand, it is the Past tense which is deemed as more appropriate to express what came into being out of non-being. In the same sense that Origen states that "the Logos did not *become* in the beginning, but he *was* what he was in the beginning"<sup>486</sup> he states, referring to John: "... using verbs in an appropriate way he applied the form 'Became' to his flesh, while 'Was' indicates his divine nature."<sup>487</sup>

So it is quite clear that Origen is perfectly aware of the significance of Past tense, namely that it denotes what came into being at a moment of the indefinite past, while it before was not at all.

This is the conceptual background against which Origen's constant use of the Past tense with respect to God's *creative act* should be considered. What should be emphasized is that this way of expression, (namely that the world is an "occurrence" brought into being out of non-being) is used not only for the actual creation but also for the *providential creation*. This means that *the will and decision of God to create originated in his benevolent freedom*. This is clearly and painstakingly portrayed by Origen.

He stresses that wisdom "wanted" (ἠβουλήθη) and "willed" (ἠθέλησεν) the creatures to come into being, using Past tense; he also says that wisdom "became" (γενόμενος) God's benevolent decision

(εὐδοκία), which actually means that God himself "became" creator.<sup>488</sup>

The very creative act out of this *decision* is portrayed in the same way: He refers to the providential creative words of (and "reasons" created by) God as "pre-uttered words" (προτρανωθέντας λόγους).<sup>489</sup> It is again significant that the term *προτρανωθέντας* is a form of verb in Past tense, namely the past participle; and this means that this "uttered words" of God to his Wisdom is not an infinitely existing fact in wisdom, but it "became", so to speak, "when" God willed so.

In the same way Origen states that the Wisdom, conceived as life, "established (ἀνεδέξατο) a relation to rational creatures (τὰ λογικά)" because this "life" willed (βουλομένη) to benefit them; so she brought their substance to participating in life (ἐπὶ τὸ ζῆν αὐτὰ προσλαβόντα μετουσίᾳς τρόπῳ)."<sup>490</sup>

It is quite obvious that there is only one and universal way, in which Origen refers to God's will to bring creation into being out of non-being; this is the constant use of Past tense. And this clearly denotes that God's will did not always exist, but it, as it were, "emerges" and it is realized in the actual creation of world.

In Origen's view there is a *decision* of God to create the world; yet this decision is depicted not as an eternal one, in the sense of beginningless duration; but it is expressed as a "will" which actually "emerged" out of God's freedom.

Origen does not say that the wisdom of God "wants" or "wills" (which would be "θέλει" or "βούλεται"); nor does he use Imperfect tense (which would be "ἤθελεν" or "εβούλετο" and might be rendered in English as "used to want" or "used to will") both tenses here, namely Present or Imperfect tense, implying that this "will" of God had not any beginning in the past.<sup>491</sup> But the forms Origen uses are "wanted" and "willed".

Accordingly, he does not say that wisdom established a creative relation to world "being" himself (which would be ὢν) God's "benevolent

decision" (ευδοκία); but he says that she "became" (γενόμενος) God's "eudokia"<sup>492</sup> and "established a relation" (σχέσιν πρὸς αὐτὰ ανεδέξατο) because she wanted "to benefit" (ωφεληῖσαι- this form is in the Past tense too) "the rational creatures" (τὰ λογικά)<sup>493</sup> which however are called as "future beings" (τὰ εσόμενα)<sup>494</sup> using the Future tense of the verb "to be" in order to denote that the actual creation is subsequent to the providential one.

It has been asserted that the Christian view differs from the Platonic one by virtue of the role of *will*.<sup>495</sup> The Platonic illustration of body and shadow, or sun and light, has been regarded as excluding God's will and choice; on the contrary the Christian idea is that creation involves divine will, not necessity, and this had already been articulated before Origen.<sup>496</sup> On the other hand, however, the notion of *will* is not altogether absent from Platonic texts. This notion can be found in *Timaeus*.<sup>497</sup> Notions of will are found in Plotinus, too, (βούλησις, θέλησις, ἐφεσις)<sup>498</sup> but he mainly uses them in order to dismiss the idea that secondary beings exist through the will of the One.<sup>499</sup> At any rate, however, Plotinus allows the lower levels of reality to create by will (θέλησις) but he regards the creation of lower levels of reality as *necessary*.<sup>500</sup>

So the very notion of *will*, regarded in itself, is a distinction which has not been unchallenged (due to that a notion of *will* can be found in Plato as well as in Plotinus)<sup>501</sup> as a criterion for the distinction between the Platonic and Christian conception of creation. However, there is a point in Origen's thought which *does* distinguish these two views of creation.

The contrast which Origen established to all versions of Platonism is to be found in what actually the notion of will of God denotes and entails.

The notion that Origen actually establishes is the radical "chasm"



between God and the world. Thus in his thought it makes no sense to speak of *necessity* in "lower" levels of reality or absence of necessity in "higher" levels of reality. These Plotinian affirmations stem from the Neoplatonic conception of the world and particularly his conception of *continuity* from the One down to the Intellect and Soul and matter. These affirmations are totally alien to Origen's thought. To him there is no *essential* difference between the ranks of life. Either they are higher or lower there are two fundamental elements which determine their being in its *essence*.

First, all rational beings are of *one nature*, due to their being created and due to their relationship to the Logos to a certain extent for all species. In respect of this, there is a universality of nature of all rational creatures, namely *rationality*, albeit its degrees vary.

Secondly, the world is *out* of God, it is the absolute "down" from the divine being; hence even a supreme rank of life is regarded as being "down".<sup>502</sup>

In Origen, "strictly speaking" (τῷ ἀκριβέῳ ἐξετάζοντι)<sup>503</sup> there are not "lower" and "higher" levels of reality of the world proper in the way Platonists regard it. What actually exists is the absolute distinction between "up" and "down", namely between the timeless divine being and the world. The notion of the radical *hiatus* between those two realities, so often stressed by Origen in the most strong and vivid terms, is exactly the ground on which he rejects any notion of necessity concerning the creation of the world. Thus, even the supreme ranks of life are regarded as being "down" in exactly the same sense that all the other ones are "down", too.

Beyond that, there is another point which radically contrasts Origen's thought from Neoplatonism. The conception of God who creates because he wills to *benefit* constitutes a major difference from the Plotinian conception of creation -a difference which has eluded those

who make assertions on Origen's thought.

In Plotinus the creative beings' thought and will is turned upon itself; this thought is not directed towards producing a creature and (which is a most striking difference) it is not *for the sake* of the creature. The creator simply creates not because it *decides* to create in order to *benefit* the creatures (least of all regarded as *future* creatures), but creates simply by being what it is, namely the creative act is a mode of the creator's very being.<sup>504</sup> The role of will in the Neoplatonic view has rather the meaning that anything which is already perfect will generate something of itself, like the light which surrounds the sun.<sup>505</sup> So, even in the few cases that the role of will is indicated in one way or another, the creation itself has a character of cosmic law rather than a *free decision* -and, least of all, the character of a *benevolent decision*. So although Plotinus indicates a *will*, this will suggests a cosmic law of creation is *beyond* whatever possesses choice (ἡποαίρεσις), or even life. It is a stark contrast that, in Origen it is not will which is beyond God, but its *God Himself* who is *beyond* the notion of God's will.<sup>506</sup>

Following the preceding discussion, the contrast to Origen's view of God as Creator is quite obvious. For our analyses right since the beginning of this chapter show that in Origen the notion of *God Himself* stands in an absolute *ontological priority* to the notion of *God as Creator*.

This, in the final analysis, means that the existence of creation in itself has a *contingent* character and it is not originated in any *necessity* whatever.<sup>507</sup>

This is the sense in which Origen affirms that the "so to speak, essence" of God should be distinguished from the essence of any created nature (οἰονεὶ ἀφιστάντι τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν γεννητῶν) to which God "has no connexion" (οἷς οὐ κοινῶναι) at all,<sup>508</sup> the expression

"as it were" implies Origen's fundamental view that God is "beyond essence",<sup>509</sup> namely that he "does not participate in essence at all"<sup>510</sup> and it is him who created "essence" since essence was "uncreated" (αγέννητον) before creation; and God "is transcendent to anything that pertains to the world" (τόν υπερβαίνοντα πάντα τὰ τοῦ κόσμου πράγματα).<sup>511</sup> It is due to this emphasis on God's radical transcendence to the world that there can be no question of "essence" or "non-essence" of God. His being is beyond any problematique about "essence" whatsoever. For essence began to make sense only when creation came into being for the first time and, therefore, essence proper is ontologically posterior to God Himself.

So the remarks of G. Florovski<sup>512</sup> about the "distance of essences" between God and the world is but a notion of Origen. It is indicative of how little he knew about Origen's thought that he attributes this notion to John of Damascus.<sup>513</sup> He also appeals to Augustine who said "nihilque in ea esse quod ad Trinitatem pertineat, nisi quod Trinitas condidit" (There is not anything which is related to the Trinity, apart from the fact that the Trinity has created it).<sup>514</sup>

In fact, however, it was Origen who had preceded Augustine by affirming the complete irrelevance of the Wisdom to anything created and the "establishment" of a "creative relation" to the world out of benevolence of God (ευδοκία Θεού).

Concluding this analysis we may say this: In referring to God's creative act, Origen uses the verbs in a way which is quite indicative of how he conceives the "creative relation"<sup>515</sup> of God to creation:

When he refers to the being of Wisdom, namely the son of God, he uses the Present tense and he stresses that "wisdom is being" (ἐστὶ ὑπάρχουσα),<sup>516</sup> thereby denoting his view of the atemporal being of God; for he considers Present tense as the most appropriate one in order to talk about the being of God.<sup>517</sup> He also quotes the Imperfect tense used

by John in the beginning of his gospel and he very emphatically stresses that the being of the Logos of God is articulated through the term "was" (ἦν) and not to any form such as "became" (ἐγένετο); he stresses that the latter is appropriate only for what came into being out of non-being, like "life", as John himself says that life "became" in the Logos.<sup>518</sup>

When he refers to the actual creation he states it as "future beings" (τά εσόμενα) using the Future tense. He is perfectly conscious of the meaning of this tense, namely that it is used to indicate something not existing at present but coming into existence in the future,<sup>519</sup> namely "after" what is indicated by the Present tense.

Finally, when he refers to the *decision* of God to create and the *will* of Wisdom to establish a creative relation to what was to come into being out of non being, he uses Past tense, in order to suggest that this decision came out of God's freedom and it is not a predication which would be applied to God Himself. By referring to the "creative relation" of the Logos to the creation through the use of Past tense, Origen indicates an "occurrence" appeared as of an indefinite moment of the past and not existing before that moment at all.<sup>520</sup>

The point which we have just tried to make is quite a crucial one, not only for the portrayal of Origen's concept of time, but also for his theology as a whole. For it is generally asserted that Origen held the so-called doctrine of the eternity of world. What is attributed to him is that he regards the world as something like an "eternal companion" of God. Koetschau, in his edition of *Princ.*, embodies in the text two Fragments, in which Origen is presented as holding such a view. Yet these two passages<sup>521</sup> do not actually belong to this work; for they are nothing more than allegations of Justinian, cited in his *libOr*; there is no reason to accept either that these passages belong to this work or that, at any rate, they have something to do with Origen's authentic views themselves, as stated in his original works. Far from it.

If Origen had a view of the world being with God apart from any notion of beginning, then this world (whatever its nature would be)<sup>522</sup> should stand in a relation to God not too different than the relation of the father's to the son. For both, world and the Son, would be regarded as timeless as well as beginningless. Yet it is very interesting to see how Origen articulates his view on the one hand of God's relation to the world and on the other of the father's relation to the son. For it is again in implicit terms of time that Origen depicts the radically different nature of the relation in either of these two perceptions.

As far as the world is concerned we need not to make any further analyses; for God's creative relation to world has already been discussed; God "willed" to bring world into being out of non being and so he did. We have accordingly argued that this notion entails that there was a "when"<sup>523</sup> that only God was; and there was a "then" that there were both God and his *decision* to create beings out of non-being.<sup>524</sup>

Let us then see how Origen depicts the relation of the father to the son. A passage from *homJer* reads as follows:

"If 'anyone who commits a sin is said to be begotten by the devil' [I John,3,8], then we have been begotten by the devil as many times as we have committed sins; miserable then is he who is always (αεί) begotten by the devil and, again, blessed is he who is always (αεί) begotten by God. For I shall say that a just man has been begotten by God not only once (ού γάρ ἀνάξ), but he is always (αεί) begotten in each particular good deed in which God begets a just man; and if I let you know about the saviour, that the father did not just beget the son and was thereafter detached from him, but he always begets him (ουχί ἐγέννησεν ὁ πατήρ τόν υἱόν καί ἀπέλυσεν αὐτόν ἀπό τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ γεννά αὐτόν), then I shall say something similar about any just man. Let us then see what our saviour is. He is an 'effluence of glory'.<sup>525</sup> We cannot say either that the effluence of glory has been begotten (ουχί ἀνάξ

γεγέννηται καὶ οὐχὶ γεννάται) but the effluence of God's own glory is begotten exactly for as long as there is the light which creates the effluence. Our saviour is God's wisdom and this wisdom is an 'effluence of eternal light'.<sup>526</sup> If therefore the saviour is always begotten (εἰ ὁ σωτὴρ αἰὶ γεννάται), this is why he says 'he begets me before all mountains'<sup>527</sup> (he does not say that he has begotten me before all mountains, but he says 'he begets me before all mountains') and the saviour is always begotten by the father (καὶ αἰὶ γεννάται ὁ σωτὴρ ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς)."<sup>528</sup>

The same notion is found in the *Princ*: "...the Father begets the only begotten Son and brings forth a Holy Spirit, not as beings who did not exist before, but in the sense that the Father is the origin and source of the Son or the Holy Spirit and no thought of before or after can be entertained in respect of them...".<sup>529</sup> Origen explicitly rejects any idea that "God the Father ever existed, even for a single moment, without begetting his wisdom".<sup>530</sup> It is remarkable that, at that point of *Princ*, he refers to the relation of the father to the son by commenting on the same scriptural passage (namely, Prov.8,25) as in the Greek passage in his Homily on Jeremiah. What he affirms there is this:

"God was always the Father of his only-begotten Son, who was born indeed from him and draws his being from him, but he is yet without any beginning, not only of that kind which can be distinguished by periods of time, but even of that kind which the mind alone is wont to contemplate in itself and to perceive, if I may so say, with the bare intellect and reason. Wisdom, therefore, must be believed beyond the limits of any beginning that we can speak or understand."<sup>531</sup>

What we see here is that Origen again stresses that it is the Present tense which can (with the minimum inaccuracy) express the relation of the father to the son.

What Origen strongly *rejects* here is any implication that the

birth of the son is an "occurrence" which occurred "once" and the son exists thereafter. This is just an ontological relation and no notion of "beginning", as a "coming into being out of non-being", can be applied there.

But this is exactly what Origen *affirms* about creation. The expression "to come into being out of non-being" is typical of the way in which Origen depicts creation. It is exactly through this expression that he contrasts the son's being from the creation:

"Christ's birth<sup>532</sup> is not, as some people think, a way from non-being into being, but it is a way from 'being in form of god'<sup>533</sup> to undertaking the 'form of a servant'.<sup>534</sup> And, as we already noted, Origen's phrase about Christ, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν was later largely used against Arianism.<sup>535</sup>

The contrast in the two different ways Origen regards these two different relations to God is quite obvious. The world came into being out of non-being. Such a notion can by no means be applied to Christ, even when we speak of his incarnation. It is quite indicative of how strongly Origen feels about this view that he remains remarkably scrupulous when he refers to the two meanings of the term "wisdom". Thus when he regards the "theoremata" and "reasons" (which are also called "wisdom") he stresses that they are "made"<sup>536</sup> and not beginningless, in this way distinguishing this "wisdom" from the person of the Son of God who timelessly *was* (not *became*) with the Father.<sup>537</sup>

According to this perception of the relation of the creation to God, Origen in a number of places states God as the "cause" of creation. It should be emphasized that he applies this notion to the conception of "coming into being out of non-being", namely to the creative act of God, that is to the creation of *both* incorporeal and corporeal nature. Thus God is stated as a "cause" by virtue of the fact that he created both "corporeals and incorporeals" (τῶν σωματικῶν καὶ τῶν ἀσωμάτων, καὶ

τούτων ἀνάντων αἰτίου Θεοῦ).<sup>538</sup> The same predication is also attributed to Christ, in as much as he is regarded as Creator of what came into being out of non-being, namely as Wisdom who "willed" to "establish a creative relation to future beings" [s. *supra*]. Thus Christ is also stated as a "cause" because it is he who gave the "being" (αἰτία ... ὡς τό εἶναι διδοῦς) out of non-being.<sup>539</sup> In another passage, too, Christ is stated as the "cause" of everything, be it "visible or invisible", in the sense that he "is before them and is cause of them" by virtue of the fact that he gave them their "being" (τό εἶναι).<sup>540</sup> At that point Origen is particularly clear that he alludes not only to the actual creation but also to the providential one; thus he speaks not just of the making but of the "substantification" (ουσιώσει)<sup>541</sup> suggesting that Christ is a "cause" not only of the actual existence of things but also of the creation of the "reasons" of them -a notion to which par excellence Origen applies the predication of "coming into being out of non-being".<sup>542</sup>

In the context of his erroneous prejudices about Origen's thought, C. Bigg tries to connect Origen's conception of creation to Platonism. He knows, however, that he cannot do that with a direct relation to Plato at this point. For in the *Timæus* the world of Ideas appear to have an independent eternal existence from the Demiurge -and Bigg acknowledges that.<sup>543</sup> Thus, as regards this point, he tries to maintain his allegation of "Platonism" in Origen through a connexion to Philo's notion of creation, namely that the Ideas exist in the divine Mind.<sup>544</sup> But he is wrong again. For in Philo's thought there is a Platonic notion to which Origen's conception of creation is entirely contrasted: Philo regards a "world of ideas" which function not only as "models" but also as *efficient causes*<sup>545</sup> -which is a notion alien to Origen's thought, in which these "patterns" are creatures and the only "cause" of creation is God.

Further, what Bigg did not comprehend is this: As Philo refers to an "original matter"<sup>546</sup> there is a conception which excludes creation *ex*



*nihilo* in a strict sense. This latter has been pointed out by A. Chroust as an inference; but we can support this conclusion by appealing to a passage where he presents God creating in a Platonic sense, namely as "putting in order on what is disorderly" (τὴν ἀκοσμίαν ἐν κόσμῳ τιθεῖς), his only difference from Plato being that Philo perceives this eternal "disorderly" cosmic state as "incorporeal".<sup>547</sup> Besides there are at least two statements of Philo that creation out of non-being is impossible.<sup>548</sup> So Origen's conception of providential creation has actually nothing to do with Philo's views. For in Origen the "patterns" are created *out of nothing* and they *are not* regarded as "causes" of the actual creation. On both these decisive points Origen's thought stands in direct contrast to the respective views of Philo's.

The very notion of "cause" that Origen applies to the "being" (and by this general term we allude to both the providential and actual creation) is of utmost importance. For the adoption of this notion is strikingly indicative of his conception of creation as having an actual "beginning". It is a fundamental principle stated by Origen that *what proceeds from a cause must necessarily have a beginning*.<sup>549</sup> The very fact, therefore, that creation had a *cause* entails that it had a *beginning*, too.<sup>550</sup> Although Origen clearly states that this "cause" does not imply any notion of causality but suggests the very fact that creation came into being out of non-being<sup>551</sup> and "cause" is He who brought it into being,<sup>552</sup> the very adoption of the category of *cause* clearly indicates his constant view that creation is not beginningless whatever. And not only that. The beginning of creation implies clearly that the being of God in Himself is *prior* to what was created. For Origen regards as a principle that "*What creates is older than what is created*. (Πάν γάρ τό ποιοῦν πρεσβύτερον τοῦ πεποιημένου)".<sup>553</sup> The relation of God to creation is radically different from the relation of the Father to the Son.<sup>554</sup> There can be no perception of a reality in which

the Son was not. But there is a clear conception of the divine being where there was no creation at all, neither a providential nor an actual one.<sup>555</sup>

Hence, Origen's views themselves as well as the manner in which he articulates those views clearly denote that in his thought there is no room for any notion like that of "eternity of world". It is Origen himself who vehemently attacks Heracleon who "most impertinently" "says that neither aeon nor what is in aeon was made through the Logos, thinking that they were made before the Logos".<sup>556</sup>

The very notion of "beginning" denotes that creation was created out of non-being. This is why, in *Cels*, Origen challenges "those who hold that the world is not created" stating that "they cannot speak of any *beginning* of the world" (ὥς οὐκ ἔστιν οὖν τοῖς ἀχένητον υφισταμένοις τὸν κόσμον ἀρχὴν αὐτοῦ εἰπεῖν).<sup>557</sup> They are those who believe in any kind of beginningless of the world (like the Platonists who held the notions of an intelligible world and of a beginningless matter) and Origen explicitly opposes them, as he himself throughout his theology *does* speak of the *beginning* of the world, namely of its creation out of non-existence. This is why he has no difficulty in speaking of a "*before*" the creation of "*any rational nature*" (πρὸ πάσης λογικῆς φύσεως).<sup>558</sup> This is what he does at that point of *Cels*, too, as he reaffirms his view that "the world came into existence" (ὁ κόσμος γεγένηται) and "God gave existence to everything" (θεὸς ἐφέστηκεν τοῖς ὅλοις).<sup>559</sup>

In contrast to those who "cannot speak of any *beginning* of the world"<sup>560</sup> Origen himself quite often uses the notion of *beginning*. Thus, in denying that evil exists in rational nature by nature, he expounds his views speaking of "natures existing in the beginning" (ἀρχήθεν φύσεις)<sup>561</sup> asserting that a rational nature is what it is (in term of moral quality) due to its own responsibility and not because it was made as such *in the beginning* (ἀρχήθεν)

Although God's decision to create appears in a timeless reality (namely, the divine reality) Origen inevitably has to express this notion in temporal terms and this is why he calls on the reader not to be embarrassed by using temporal terms speaking of a timeless reality.<sup>562</sup> Behind this literary convention, however, we can see Origen's deeper perception of either *God in Himself* and *God as Creator* and the ontological priority of the former to the latter.

In his thought there is a notion of "when" God decided to create. It is quite significant to ponder upon this "when" and to see Origen's view on this. He states that "The wisdom of God is a substance in herself existing before the aeons as a timeless one; and *when* (ὅτε) she accepted a relation to creatures *then* (τότε) she *became* the beginning of God's works, either they are constructional or providential; so this beginning is yoked together with creatures of which she *became* beginning, and we mean her relation to creatures; but wisdom herself is timeless existing substantially in God before the aeons".<sup>563</sup>

Thus, although Origen is constantly stressing the atemporal character of wisdom's being, yet he holds a notion that creation, even as a *thought* or *will* or *decision* of God, does not exist in wisdom herself eternally in timelessness.

There is a notion of "*when ... then*" which clearly implies Origen's conception of God as being Creator not of necessity and the fact that he visualizes a reality of God being no Creator *yet*. Although the term "yet" is obviously not meant literally, it is indicative, however, that Origen holds a conception of *God in Himself* quite apart from any notion of creation.

The conception of God in Himself as quite distinct from his being known as Creator, is exactly what allows Origen to hold that creation does not introduce a change in God Himself. This is why Origen had no reason to deal with the pseudo-question "What was God doing before

creation?". R. Sorabji<sup>564</sup> attributes this concern to Origen but his mistake is that he grounds this view on the *Princ* whereas the whole of Origen's work in Greek proves that he needed not to deal with such a nonsense. For such a question is based on a completely unreasonable premise: When one speaks of *before* he has already established the entirely arbitrary presupposition that *time exists*. He speaks of divine life *having postulated* that this is a *temporal* reality. This is why he speaks of "before". But once it has been explicated that divine reality is *timeless* then no question of the sort can be posed. For in such a case, an unacceptable irrationality is arbitrarily introduced into the discussion. It is as irrational as like torturing somebody during an interrogation asking him "What did you do in America?" ignoring his affirmations and the established fact that he has never been in America.

Origen was a man of sound logic and a profound knowledge of the rules of dialectics. This is why he did not feel it necessary to deal with a pseudo-question like this. Once he had affirmed, in the clearest possible terms, that divine reality is timeless, he knew that terms such as "before" or "after" or "later" are just inevitable (yet conscious) linguistic inaccuracies.<sup>565</sup> Least of all, he would take this inevitable linguistic inaccuracy as an actual philosophical problem and deal with it seriously. For the notions of "before" or "after" applied to divine timelessness suggest nothing more than the ontological relation of the *will* of God to creation.

So Origen did not need to discuss in the way R. Sorabji<sup>566</sup> does, how it is possible for creation to imply no change to God Himself. The usual mistake (made there, too) over Origen's conception about the "generation" of the Son from the Father is this: Scholars speak of "eternal generation" of the Son, as if it were a *continuous action* of the Father. Yet the fact is that Origen speaks of "generation" portraying an *ontological relation* within the divine life, and not an *act* whatsoever.<sup>567</sup>

By contrast, creation came into being out of non-being through a creative *act* of God, namely out of his creative "utterance" *Γεννηθήτω* (Let be). In fact it is quite crucial a point that creation is regarded as not "co-substantial" to God, whereas the Son is portrayed as *ομοούσιος* to the Father, a notion of Origen's which has serious implications for his thought. Again, however, we shall not elaborate on this point, which is beyond our scope. For such a discussion requires an extensive exposition of Origen's theology.

At any rate, the fact that creation is a product of God's free *will*, as well as that what came into being out of non-being is "not co-substantial" with God Himself, are two main points which underline Origen's conviction that the fact that God created does not establish any change in God Himself. Indeed, the distinction between God in Himself and God as known to the world is one of the most fundamental conceptions of Origen's, stated throughout his work.<sup>568</sup>

Human intellect, being in time by necessity, would be tempted to pose a question such as "does this decision of God coincide with the realization of creation or is it prior to this?". The strict answer is that this question itself does not make any sense at all, because in timelessness there can be no notion of "before". Yet Origen does affirm that the providential creation was brought into being "before" the actual one. What this notion of "*when ... then*" indicates is that this creation of reasons, according to which the world was made, is not something which characterizes Wisdom in herself. This means that the relation of Wisdom, even as Logos, to creatures is not an element of the substance of wisdom herself. This is exactly expressed by the affirmation that wisdom "accepted" (*εδέξατο*) this relation to "future" creatures (*τὰ εσόμενα*). Hence if it is asked whether or not can we visualize a state of Wisdom without necessarily thinking of creation or implying it at any way, Origen's answer is that indeed we can think of Wisdom in such a

way. For creation itself is but a product of God's own freedom. This is the actual perception suggested by the expression "*when ... then*" and by the verb "accepted" (εδέξατο), as well as by the verbs "wanted" (ἠβουλήθη) and "willed" (ἠθέλησεν) in the passages discussed in the previous pages.

In view of this conception, the basic idea of the *conditionality* of creation lies in Origen's works. R. Sorabji's assertion,<sup>569</sup> therefore, that this idea is a discovery of Augustine is not correct. It was Origen who clearly explicated that creation is a product of God's free will, namely that God would have never created if he did not will to do so.

R. Norris<sup>570</sup> has taken for granted that Origen holds a Platonic view of an "eternally" pre-existing "world of intelligences", namely he has taken the typical view which has been regarded as convenient by so many scholars in portraying Origen's thought. Yet he finds himself somewhat confused -as he finds certain notions which are unlikely a Platonist: "From a point of view of a Platonist, there is a contradiction involved in saying both that something is incorporeal and that it is generate."<sup>571</sup>

The only comments which we should like to make here is that Norris would be more confused if he had grasped one more point of Origen's thought, which has totally eluded him: Not only Origen held that something can be incorporeal as well as generate, but also this "generate" is not "co-substantial" with the divine incorporeality -a distinction which Plato would not even dream of making whereas to Gnostics it would seem outrageous. As we discuss later in this work, there are distinctive facets of Origen's thought which are not just not Platonic, but actually constitute a counter-point of Platonism.<sup>572</sup> At any rate, the "contradiction" does not lie with Origen but with those, such as Norris, who *a priori* postulated him as a "Platonist" and tried to construe his thought on this erroneous premise.

There should be no doubt that, in *Princ*, Rufinus has utterly obscured the notions articulated there.<sup>573</sup> For the perception of Origen about the "reasons" coming into being out of non-being into the Wisdom (a notion so clearly enunciated in his works in Greek) is not clearly articulated, and rendered in an obscure (and we think, laboriously obscure) manner. Rufinus obviously had not grasped Origen's distinction between *God in Himself*, on the one hand, and *God as Creator* out of a free *decision* and *will* of his, on the other. So he apparently was afraid that creation's coming into being would entail some kind of "change" in *God in Himself*. We think that those points of this work (in which the so-called "Why not sooner?" argument appears to be implicitly faced) is but a catastrophic interpolation of Rufinus,<sup>574</sup> which has aroused so many misunderstandings of Origen's thought. Rufinus was obviously afraid that Origen's theology could not answer a question such as "What was God doing Before Creation?" or "Why did he not create sooner?"<sup>575</sup> But such a question was posed not by Origen but by Gnostics and Manichaeans,<sup>576</sup> namely the heretics whom Origen attacks so many times either implicitly or by name.

This was a major mistake of Rufinus' -and the juxtaposition of texts extant both in Greek and Latin show that he was a man of good will but also of not particularly high intelligence or interpretative ability. For all of the writings which are extant in Greek clearly show that Origen did not need to face this fake-question; for he clearly distinguishes the conception of *God in Himself* from the notion of God's *decision* and *will* to create. That *God decided to create* does not entail any change in Himself. On the contrary, in spite of the fact that God *decided* to create, *He Himself* remains unchanged. Origen's statements in *Cels* leave no room for doubt on this question: He explicitly contends that "the teaching of Jews and Christians preserves the unchangeable and unalterable of God (τὸ ἀπεναντον καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον τοῦ Θεοῦ) ... For in

prayers to God the scripture says 'But You are the same'. And it is believed that it is God who has said 'I have not changed' ".<sup>577</sup>

Further, in the same work, he explicates this conception of God quite unequivocally:

"If he (sc. Celsus) had read the words of the prophets, where David says, 'But You are the same' and where Malachi, I think, says 'And I have not changed',<sup>578</sup> he would have seen that *none of us say that change takes place in God concerning either His action or our conceptions about Him. Remaining the same* He controls the things that are subject to change, as that is their nature; and they are governed through the power of his Logos."<sup>579</sup>

The ontological priority of the notion of God Himself to any conception of Him is again clearly explicated. So the "conceptions" of God as Creator or as Judge or as Provident or whatever one would conceive him of, do not suggest any change in God Himself, who is beyond any possibility of change. Particularly, as far as the creative act of God is concerned, the notion of his decision and will plays a decisive role in this distinction, which at any rate is a fundamental premise of Origen's thought.

What Rufinus has not grasped in its full significance, was the major break between Platonic thought and the thought of Origen: This break lies in the notion of "coming into being out of non-being".

Plato did adhere to the general tradition of his day that nothing ever becomes out of nothing.<sup>580</sup> To him "creation" itself consists in bringing order and "measure" into chaos<sup>581</sup> and in nothing else. The term creation as found in the *Timaeus* does not imply any original generation *ex nihilo*, but an act of ordering and bringing symmetry into the pre-existing chaos of the original "cosmic stuff". *This* is the point of major contrast between Plato and Origen. According to Plato, Being and Action, true existence and its creative action, Substance and Function,



are synonymous,<sup>582</sup> in fact, according to Plato, God would have never really existed before He actually created. It is God's infinite charity and his perfection that always compels Him<sup>583</sup> to exercise His creative power in actuality.

On the contrary, Origen *did* hold the idea of coming into being out of non-being, and he repeatedly stresses this notion. It is because of this that he *does not need* to employ any Platonic notion of everlasting exercise of divine creative activity. God in Himself and God as Creator are by no means synonymous (as they were to Plato) -on the contrary. This is the point which Rufinus did not grasp and hence his interpolations into the *Princ* in which he deals with a problem for which there is no room in Origen's theology.

Besides, at the same point of the *Princ*,<sup>584</sup> Rufinus presents Origen as holding that creation, as narrated in Genesis, is not the very beginning of the world. In fact Rufinus appears unaware of Origen's conception of providential and actual creation. His concern is to present Origen as holding that God never was "idle". Thus he considers only the actual world and interpolates the assertion that the narration in Genesis refers only to the creation of the present world. Thus Rufinus confuses the notion of successive worlds (s. chapter 2) with Origen's conception of the creative act of God. The latter has totally eluded Origen's translator. Hence, anyone who would rely on such statements of the *Princ* is bound to be confused and be led to misleading conclusions. This is exactly what has happened with the vast majority of those who have offered accounts of Origen's thought on this point.

However, it can be clearly drawn from the passages in Greek that Origen regards the narration in Genesis as referring to the very beginning of creation.<sup>585</sup> For, both the notions of providential and actual creation are grounded on passages of Genesis, as we have seen. Thus the pertinent discussion in these two paragraphs in the Latin version of the

*Princ* should be regarded as an interpolation of Rufinus. For one thing, he regarded the "why not sooner?" pseudo-question as a real problem and deemed that he ought to "defend" Origen's thought on this ground. At the same time, however, he was unaware of crucial aspect of Origen's thought, such as the distinction of the notions of God Himself and God as Creator, the conception of time as well as the whole conception of creation in the Alexandrian's thought.

What we have attempted in this discussion is to portray Origen's view of one of the most mystical doctrines of his entire theology exclusively based upon his own affirmations and with no deductions or conclusions drawn dialectically. Certainly there are some points in this exposition which seem to be paradoxical. For example, it would be asked how is it possible to speak of a "beginning", as coming into being out of non-being, in a reality which is timeless. Similarly, one could ask how is it possible to speak of actual creation coming into being "after" the providential creation.

In fact this is the very point where Origen's distinction between *God in Himself* and *God as Creator* appears as the most decisive factor for understanding his thought. This distinction constitutes a truth which can be apprehended through bare mind, but Origen did know that this doctrine was bound to be misunderstood once articulated. This is exactly why he regarded this doctrine as a "mystical" one. And this is why he states that this doctrine is "difficult to articulate" (δυσδιήγητον) and "far beyond our linguistic ability" (καί νοῦν τῆς ἀέξεως ἡμῶν μείζον).<sup>586</sup> We should recall, however, that Origen emphasizes that his use of temporal categories when speaking of the divine timelessness should be regarded in a loose sense because the non-existence of time is clearly explicated.<sup>587</sup>

This is exactly what renders a certain conception "mystical". Origen was fully aware of that. He does comment upon the point where

Celsus speaks of the Greek opinions about why man has assumed a body yet he does not set forth his own views of the question.<sup>588</sup> He only makes an implication using the Stoic expression *καταληπτική φαντασία* (direct apprehension)<sup>589</sup> affirming that this indeed constitutes a "criterion" for knowledge of a certain subject.<sup>590</sup>

This is how he alludes to his perception of this mystical doctrine, namely that one could acquire a certain knowledge of it yet this knowledge would be grasped not through words but through bare mind and reason. The same Stoic expression, namely *καταληπτική φαντασία*, is used in order to affirm that "an attempt to substantiate a narration, even if it is true, and to produce a full knowledge of it (*καταληπτικὴν ἐμποιῆσαι περὶ αὐτῆς φαντασίαν*) is one of the most difficult tasks *and is in some cases impossible*."<sup>591</sup>

This is a point on which much would be said; however, since Origen himself does not discuss it and the question is actually beyond our scope we shall make only a few hints about the deeper conception of "grasping" truth through "bare reason".

In conceiving God in Himself and God as Creator there is a correlation of the temporal human intellect with the atemporal divine being. Human expressions can be but *tensed*, as Origen enunciates, in this agreeing with Aristotle. This is the so-called *discursive thought* which takes one thing after another *progressively* and it depends on imprinted images and, consequently, this thought is spread out in time. So, in discursive thought there is an intrinsic *complex* character. In contrast to this there is the *non-discursive thought* which involves no complexity and is not directed to propositions, which are complex. The Greeks and, much more, oriental thinkers, acknowledged this kind of perceiving truth, namely through the most direct and non-propositional way. The Stoics spoke of *καταληπτική φαντασία*; Plotinus (although dissenting from the Stoics on so many points) regarded this kind of

thought in terms of contact with the higher reality.<sup>592</sup> In Origen the case is quite different, since his world-picture and mode of thought is quite different from either the Stoic or the Neoplatonic one. In fact, the contemplation of truth through non-discursive thought involves an apprehension which has a *timeless* object of knowledge, namely the divine reality. This is why it is stated that "there are certain things, the meaning of which is impossible to explain by any human language, but which are made clear rather through simple apprehension than through any power of words. This rule must control our interpretation even of the divine writings, in order that what is said therein may be estimated in accordance not with the meanness of the language but with the divine power of the Holy Spirit who inspired the composition."<sup>593</sup>

Besides, it is Origen's view that no progress is so adequate that one might come in contact with God. This is one of his major points of difference from Plotinus<sup>594</sup> and stems from the Christian notion of a radical gap and discontinuity between the divine reality and the world. If Origen can hold (as he does) a notion of non-discursive apprehension divine reality this is not because man "ascends" through mystical progress, but because God "descends" as Logos and is present into each rational creature. We shall fully discuss this aspect of Origen's thought shortly below. So the apprehension "through bare mind and reason" or the *καταληπτική φαντασία*, as Origen calls it, is actually a kind of "instruction" offered by the Logos. In the final analysis it is an instruction pertaining to *timelessness* which, however, is offered into *temporality*. In timelessness there is no complexity, there is no "progress" and the discussion about this reality is beyond any sort of dialectics.

This is the very fact due to which this apprehension "through bare reason" (in fact, "reason" is the very term for Logos) *cannot* be expressed in discursive thought. For once one attempts to do it, he will

inevitably involve what is *timeless* (and thus not susceptible of extension and progress) into a discursive thought and propositions which are *a priori* bound with progress and spread out in time. This means that one might attempt to express a *timeless* reality through means which are by nature bound with *time*, they presuppose time and their discussion inevitably involves the discussed reality with time -which is absurd. This is the very reason why Origen deliberately and constantly avoided discussing this timeless reality through a discursive thought and he only appealed to apprehension "through bare mind and reason" and to the καταληπτική φαντασία of those who wish to comprehend these doctrines. And this is an attitude which is indicative not only of his respect to the transcendence of the divine reality, but also of his sound dialectical discipline. In fact this attitude cannot be challenged by anyone who claims to stick to the rules of logic and dialectics. No one could ask of any "before" the providential creation, in which "before" there was only God but no creation at all. The very question is absurd. For once one poses a question about any "before"<sup>595</sup> (or implies any similar temporal notion) he has already *postulated time into timelessness*, namely he grounds his question on an entirely arbitrary and absurd premise. By appealing to καταληπτική φαντασία, Origen exactly wishes to avert his readers from pseudo-questions of this sort.

Thus there is a point which we wish to make perfectly clear. In approaching this Origen's thought one should get rid of premises which are plausible only in a temporal situation. For instance, if we say that something was white and it *became* blue, it is reasonable to assume that there is a "moment" which marks the *succession* from being white to becoming blue.<sup>596</sup> But such an assumption is not plausible in timelessness. Unless this point has been fully apprehended, one is bound to think of timelessness on the same premises that he thinks of temporal state. In that case the misleading conclusions are inevitable.

Thus, in discussing Origen's views of time and creation with respect to God, one has always to stick to the fundamental premise explicated by Origen himself, namely that divine reality is a state of *timelessness* -not everlasting duration.<sup>597</sup>

By virtue of the very fact that atemporality is *atemporality*, one cannot think of either *succession* or some *turning point* into timelessness, as if this state were subject to (or, bound with) temporal flux. There are no *turning points* nor *moments* nor *succession* nor *temporal flux* in timelessness. Subsequently, any question pertaining to timelessness and involving notions of this sort is groundless and misleading. Once *timelessness* is regarded as a kind of *duration* the discussion is bound to be misleading and prejudicial to Origen's authentic views. For the fundamental premise (that of timelessness), established by him, is disposed through the very fact that temporal notions of "succession", and the sort, are arbitrarily introduced into the discussion.

To articulate this reality in words (which, in themselves constitute a temporal function and they are a manifestation of the temporal reality) is entirely impossible. To visualize it, or to feel it, (in a way which is inevitably vague) is not impossible. At any rate, it would be a fundamental mistake (which would thoroughly mislead the whole problematique and perception of the question) to establish temporal notions and through them to articulate temporal questions in timelessness. This is exactly what Origen constantly and deliberately avoided to do.

Our conclusion is therefore that there is no notion of any "eternity of the world" in Origen's thought. What Origen actually holds is quite the opposite. Creation came into being out of non-being by an act of God's will.<sup>598</sup> This pertains not only to the creation of the world but even to his providential creation, even to his *will* to create and indeed to his *decision* to create. In any case, Origen does hold a perception of God in

Himself, that is a perception of God without necessarily thinking of him as Creator.<sup>599</sup>

## §5. God, World and Time

**The "place" of the Logos.** It is in respect of the world itself, as a philosophical category, by which the intellectual distinction between Wisdom and Logos is made. For Logos is perceived as the Wisdom herself in her relation to the world. Speaking either of Wisdom or of Logos one actually refers to the same person, namely the son of God himself. The difference nevertheless is that Wisdom indicates the living incorporeal personal substance in herself, without any allusion to the world or to anything else, while the Logos is the Wisdom conceived in her "communication to rational creatures" (κατά μὲν τὴν σύστασιν τῆς περὶ τῶν ὁρῶν θεωρίας καὶ νοημάτων τῆς σοφίας νοουμένης, κατά δὲ τὴν πρὸς τὰ λογικὰ κοινωνίαν τοῦ λόγου λαμβανομένου).<sup>600</sup> This means that when a rational creature at any rate communicates to Wisdom he comprehends her as Logos.

Origen's notion about "conceptions" of the son is exactly what allows him to portray his perception of the correlation of timeless God to the temporal world. This correlation is possible through the assertions of Origen's about the Logos. For the Logos actually becomes a kind of span, through which this relation is established. This is how the relation between the Logos and the world is portrayed:

"...it is along those ways that the son of God is moving (καθ' ἃς οδοὺς διανορεύεται) decorating, taking thought for, making benefaction, favouring, into this [sc. the world] which was made in wisdom. In saying therefore that the Logos was in ἀρχή it is not implied that the Logos is different from her (sc. the ἀρχή, that is the wisdom) in terms of substance, but only in terms of conception and relation, so that it is the same being who is named in the scripture and who, in as much as she is

conceived in her relation to God himself, is named wisdom, and again, in as much as conceived in her relation to creatures she is called as Logos the creator." (ἀρχὴν <οὖν> εἶναι τὸν λόγον φασὶν οὐχ ἕτερον ὄντα αὐτῆς κατ' οὐσίαν ἀλλ' ἐπινοία καὶ σχέσει, ἵν' οὕτως εἰπω, ἢ μὲν ὑκεῖναι τῷ θεῷ σοφία, ἢ δὲ νένευκεν, ἵν' οὕτως εἰπω, πρὸς τὰ δημιουργήματα ὁ δημιουργικὸς λόγος).<sup>601</sup>

Origen reiterates here his view of the relation of the Logos both to God himself and to the world; but there is something more said in this passage: The Logos did not only create the world; but he also is constantly related to it, as he acts perpetually "decorating, taking thought for, making benefaction, favouring".<sup>602</sup> On the other hand, the world is regarded as something "external" to God.<sup>603</sup> Hence we should conclude that Origen conceives the Logos as being both "in" wisdom, that is to say into timelessness, and into the world, that is "out" of the Trinity.

Indeed this is what Origen holds and it is through this belief that the Logos may be regarded as a mediator between the timeless God and the temporal world.

It is Origen's view that God is the original "place, as it were" (οἶονεῖ τόπος).<sup>604</sup> But this is not the only "place" where the Logos is to be found; for he is also fully present in the world, yet not being himself part of the world; he is "extended alongside with" the world (συμπαρεκτεινόμενος). There is also another "place" where the Logos is present; this "place" is each individual rational being.

So Origen states that Christ "is as powerful as to be invisible (ἀόρατος).<sup>605</sup> in his divine nature as well as to be present in every individual man and also to be extended alongside with the whole world (ὁλῶ τῷ κόσμῳ συμπαρεκτεινόμενος). It is he who is declared by [the saying] 'He stood in the midst of us'.<sup>606</sup> He affirms the presence of the Logos in the "whole world", that is in all the ranks of life; and it is



exactly this presence of the Logos that makes creatures to be rational ones. This Logos, being within rational creatures is actually an educator; "This is, as it were, a teacher of those receiving instruction, existing inseparably in the nature of rational creatures, instructing towards what should be done, even though we decline to obey his instructions",<sup>607</sup> and he adds: "Hence he (sc. Christ) says; 'It is the Logos<sup>608</sup> which I have pronounced to you him who will judge you',<sup>609</sup> and this is equivalent to 'I myself the Logos, who is always speaking within yourselves, will condemn you and there will be no room for you to justify yourselves'".<sup>610</sup> Indeed it is this presence of the Logos who, being within men, announces the father to them.<sup>611</sup>

It is therefore Origen's conviction that the Logos is present both in timelessness and in time; and it is through him that a perpetual communication between the world and God. is being kept up. Thus Origen maintains his fundamental opinion that God is radically transcendent to the world; yet it is through the Logos that a relation between the world and God exists. This is a point of his difference from certain schools of the secular (mainly the Stoic) thought which regarded god as immanent in the world. Origen is conscious of that and in *Cels* states: "...the logos of everything is according to Celsus god himself, but in our view it is the son of God..." (ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ τῶν πάντων λόγος ἐστὶ κατὰ μὲν Κέλσον αὐτός ὁ θεός, κατὰ δέ ἡμᾶς ὁ υἱός αὐτοῦ).<sup>612</sup>

This view of the Logos in Origen has totally eluded H. Chadwick. Thus he renders Origen's affirmation of the Logos as the mediator between God and creation as in himself being "midway between uncreated nature and that of all created things".<sup>613</sup> He thinks that Origen holds a notion similar to that of Philo, according to whom "the Logos is neither uncreated like God nor created like us, but midway".<sup>614</sup> At that point, however, Origen refers to the Logos as "διὰ μετὰξὺ ὄντος τῆς τοῦ ἀγενήτου καὶ τῆς τῶν γενητῶν πάντων φύσεως"<sup>615</sup> in order to articulate

the *function* of the Logos for the sake of the world. For the Logos *in himself* is before the world and Origen has no hesitation to affirm that he is begotten<sup>616</sup> but certainly this predication portrays an ontological relation between the Father and the Son and it in no way is related to the kind of "genesis" which means "to come into being out of non-being".<sup>617</sup> It is characteristic that, in *selPs*, Origen comments on Ps.109,3 by portraying the Father saying to the Son "I begot you before any rational nature". The Logos is a "ruler" of the world yet he is also "together with" the Father.<sup>618</sup> This is clearly stated in *commJohn*, where Origen develops his argument by considering the passages Gen,1,1 and John, 1,2, namely "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" and "He was in the beginning with God". His inference is that the expression "'He *was* in the beginning' clearly suggests a seniority to what *was created* in the beginning"; therefore "the Logos is older" than all creation (τό δέ 'Εν αρχή ἦν' σαφώς πρεσβύτερόν ἐστι τοῦ ἐν ἀρχῇ πεποιημένου, οὐ μόνον στερεώματος καί ξηράς, ἀλλὰ οὐρανοῦ καί γῆς πρεσβύτερός ἐστιν ὁ λόγος).<sup>619</sup>

This is the sense in which Origen regards the term "Pantocrator" (Παντοκράτωρ) applied to Christ.<sup>620</sup> Christ is "Pantocrator" because "everything has been given to him" by the Father.<sup>621</sup>

Thus the Logos is *both* in God and in the world. It is not in his nature to be "midway" as H. Chadwick asserts. For to Origen there is no question about the nature of the Logos in himself. His nature is the divine one. Even before any creative decision or creative will or creative act of God, the Logos has always been in the divine being.

It is through his view of the Logos that Origen can correlate two notions: First, God is timeless and radically transcendent to the world. Secondly, God is the creator of this world, he communicates with it and indeed acts within it. This is the path through which Origen has been able to step from his Theology (that is his conception of God in Himself)

to his Cosmology.

**World and Time.** There is one final point we should make in examining God, World and Time, in their mutual relation in this chapter. It is the appearance of time in respect to creation.

Regarding the affirmation that Trinity alone transcends all time whereas "the rest of things ... which are external to the Trinity, must be measured by ages and periods of time".<sup>622</sup> Origen explains that this "external" means the world itself.<sup>623</sup>

Origen's notion that world was made through the Logos maintains his view God is changeless. It is the very fact that God is above time that makes Origen to regard him as not subject to change. Accordingly, rational creatures are subject to alteration and change<sup>624</sup> due to the very fact that they came into existence out of non-existence that makes them. It is also due to his view that the world is "out" of God, namely that it is something "external"<sup>625</sup> to him, that the existence of the world does not imply any notion of change in God Himself.

Indeed it is Origen's view that creation is closely related to the existence of time. He has already pointed out that the term "genesis" means "the way of coming to being out of non-being",<sup>626</sup> accordingly, it means the "substantification" (οὐσίωσιν) of rational natures.<sup>627</sup> Further, it is his view that whatever is subject to actual creation (namely, corporeality) is subject to time, too. This is why he states that "mind which is still subject to creation, and it because of that is also subject to time, cannot see God as it should",<sup>628</sup> and he further explains that time is "something" (τί)<sup>629</sup> which is closely connected to "material life (τή ενύθω ζωή)".<sup>630</sup> At this point Origen does not fail to enunciate his views related to this question. He says that it is not the same thing to speak of "not seen" (τό μή ὁράσθαι) and "invisible" (τό ἀόρατον), namely "not to be seen does not entail being invisible" but "to be invisible does entail being not seen"; "for there are many bodies which are not seen,

although they are visible either because they are, as it were, covered or because we are not in the place where they are"; but when we refer to the "invisible" it should be stressed that not even those rational creatures which are in the supreme ranks of life are able to see God, not so because of their own disability but because of the fact that God is incorporeal.<sup>631</sup>

Besides, Origen portrays the close existence of time to the actual creation of the world affirming that "time cannot be found" when what is stated as "third and fourth conceptions" of the son of God "did not exist at all".<sup>632</sup> It is "life" that Origen regards as the "third" conception of the son of God and he also holds that "life" is of those conceptions of the son of God which do not pertain to Christ in himself but only "to others" (οὐχ αὐτῷ ἀλλὰ ἐτέροις).<sup>633</sup> This means that time is closely connected with "life", which, in the final analysis, means, "distinction", "diversification" and "corporeality".

Thus the radical transcendence of God in respect to world is portrayed in a twofold way, namely both in terms of *space* (mainly expressed in terms of corporeality) and *time*. What came out of the actual creation of the world is of necessity and by its nature a corporeal being. Again, what came out of the creation of the world is of necessity and by nature a temporal being. This is why Origen says that any being, of any rank of life, is a "temporal" (ἡροσκαίρων) one "even if, in regard of his particular place (κάν ἐν συγκρίσει τόπων) he is one of the supreme ranks of life (ἐκ τῶν ἀνωτάτω τυγχάνη).<sup>634</sup>

### Conclusion

What we have discussed in this chapter is the relation between God, World and Time.

As far as the relation of God to time is concerned, Origen's view

is that God radically transcends time. No temporal category can be applied to him at all. Whenever human necessity is compelled to refer to God by the use of language, it is clear that expressions (especially when using verbs) are *a priori* inaccurate and therefore just conventional. God is also incorporeal and it is only him who is incorporeal. Life without a body is a characteristic of God only. There is no other way in which the term "life" applied to incorporeal nature can make sense. Thus God's being with respect to time is a timeless being. As God is absolutely exempt from all temporal categories, any notion of "duration" cannot be applied to him; for God's being is not an everlasting duration, which necessarily implies being into time in a mode of dominating it; but God is above and outside time; therefore his being should be apprehended as being not in everlasting duration but as a being in timelessness.

The world is a creature of God's will; it came into existence "when" the fall occurred and was made by the Logos according to a providential creation of a "wisdom" which is a creature *in* the Wisdom (namely, the Son) of God and came into being out of non-being. God willed to create out of a benevolent decision of his own freedom. Conceiving of God as Creator is quite different from the notion of God Himself - a notion which has an absolute ontological priority to any other conception of God or any theological notion employed to speak of God.

The world is closely connected with time in the sense that all the ranks of rational creatures, which are understood to comprise the one and single world, are within time, they are temporal. As there was not time before creation, strictly speaking it makes no sense to speak of a "before" the creation; but using the term "before" loosely it can be said that in Origen's view there was no world "before" creation. The world is material, consisted of matter of different qualities. The visible firmament is made of just one of the many kinds of matter.

The notion of "world" implies of necessity the existence of both

corporeality and time. "World" apart from corporeality and time is unthinkable, either as a philosophical category or as a reality. Hence, in Origen's thought there is no room for any notion of "incorporeal world" "before" time. The term "incorporeal world" applied in Origen's thought is self-contradictory and therefore absurd. For the notion of "incorporeality" excludes any existence of "world" and vice versa. Subsequently, Origen's view is that, as world came into existence out of non-existence, there is also no room for any notion of any "eternity of the world", in the sense that the "world" in any mode may have existed before this creation. Origen's thought totally rejects such a notion. It is his view that it was only God himself that was "before" creation and nothing was apart from him. The world is the radically "out" of God, yet God intervenes and acts into it through his Logos.

Origen depicts God's transcendence in respect to the world in terms of Space (mainly expressed in terms of corporeality) and Time. We have hitherto discussed the relation between God, World and Time. Whatever time is, we already know that Origen holds a notion of atemporality; we have actually seen the limits of time's existence, namely where time does not exist and where it does exist. This means that we have seen Origen's notions of atemporality and temporality as well as the relation of each other. Our next step should therefore be to discuss what Origen's conception of time in itself is.

## Chapter 2: The conception of Time

### **§1. Time in itself**

In speaking of the study of the concept of time it should be noted that scholars have paid little attention to the Stoic views of the subject. In a work meant to deal with the conceptions of time in antiquity, John Callahan<sup>1</sup> does not deal with the Stoic view of time. In contrast, when scholars speak of the influence that Stoicism exerted on Origen, they confine themselves to his appreciation of the Stoic ethics as well as to his view of freedom of will. Origen, however, was very well aware of the Stoic philosophy as a whole; and his references (particularly in *Cels*) show that he had a direct acquaintance with the Stoic writings themselves.

The fundamentals of the Stoic view of time were discussed in the Introduction in somewhat more detail than others. For, as we pointed up there, we will assert that Origen has, to a certain extent, employed the Stoic tradition on the subject. This does not mean that he adopted some fixed "Stoic view of time"; for there is not just one Stoic view of time; there is rather an evolution and further elaboration of an original conception of time.<sup>2</sup> We shall assert that Origen formed his own personal view of time according to his overall theological faith; in doing so, he selected from pagan philosophy whatever seemed to him as properly helping to the articulation of his own conception of time. However, beyond whatever might be regarded of pagan origin, we shall aver that there is a distinctive contribution by Origen towards the formation of a Christian view of time, which had a decisive (though not as yet acknowledged) impact to the Christian writers after him.

**Time as an "extension" (διάρτημα).** Origen's view on this question

clearly stands within the Stoic conception of time. This does not mean that he deals with time attempting to provide a scientific definition of it nor did he devote any *ad hoc* treatise to this question. He never was interested in composing any systematic treatise on time, like that in the *Physics* of Aristotle or that of the Aristotelian Alexander of Aphrodisias<sup>3</sup> who was almost contemporary to Origen. It merely was in the Stoic philosophy that Origen found the essential conception of *what* time proper *is*; and he adopted it, as most suitable to his own overall thought and conception of the world and its perspectives. The choices in front of him (namely, the tradition on the question) were either to consider time as an "image" (of eternity), or as a "number or measure" (of motion), or as an "extension". We have already argued (in the Introduction) that the Stoic view of time was quite independent from either the Platonic or the Aristotelian one. He employed this, because he regarded it as, in the first place, expressing his own conception of *what* time *is* and according with his overall theological views.

In order to establish that Origen holds time to be a kind of "extension" (διάστημα) there is no need to make any logical inferences whatever. For it is Origen himself who articulates his temporal notions using the very word *extension*. In contrast, he never uses categories which would even remotely remind anything of either Platonic or Aristotelian views.

Thus he refers to periods of time using the expression "this temporal *extension*" (τό χρονικόν τούτο διάστημα)<sup>4</sup> and "the temporal *extension* itself" (αυτό δέ τό χρονικόν διάστημα).<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, (quoting and explaining the parable in Matt. 20,1-16) he speaks of "*extensions* (διαστήματα) between the third the sixth and the ninth hour" as well as of the "*extension* (διάστημα)" from the time of Moses until the time of Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup> In the same work he ponders upon the deeper meaning of the "three equal *extensions* (τρία ἴσα διαστήματα) [between] the third and



sixth and ninth hour" and of the "smaller *extension* (ἐλάττω διαστήμα)" between the eleventh and twelfth hour as well as of the "*extension* (διάστημα) from the dawn until the third hour".<sup>7</sup>

The same term, namely *διάστημα*, had also been used by Athenagoras in *De Resurrectione Mortuorum*. He used the expression *ισομέτροις χρόνου διαστήμασιν* (equal intervals of time).<sup>8</sup> However, it could by no means be regarded as something more than a Stoic influence -on this point we endorse M. Spanneut's view. Athenagoras did nothing to elaborate a Christian view of the essence of time -at his time there was no such a sophisticated notion like that which Origen developed. Besides, this Stoic view had its counterpoints even among Christians. Until now it is only Tatian's brief statement on time which has enjoyed a lot of attention among scholars. However there is another view, spelled out by a Christian writer, and (as far as we know) neglected hitherto. We refer to Justin, who was contemporary to Athenagoras. In a work intended to refute certain views of Aristotle, he first quotes Aristotelian passages and then his own arguments against them. The reader can see in quite a number of points that although Justin rejects certain Aristotelian views of time (such as beginninglessness and infinity of time), he remains faithful to the Aristotelian view of time as a "number" of motion.<sup>9</sup> Thus, at the time of Athenagoras and Justin, (which is, more or less, seventy years before Origen) there was no view of time proper established as a Christian one; least of all there seems to have been agreement on this issue. It was Origen who elaborated and established the Christian conception of time; and, as we shall see later in this section, Christian writers after Origen employed his fundamental conception of time proper as well his terminology, in order to articulate their temporal notions.

Thus Origen constantly regards (and names) time as "extension". He speaks of the "*extension* of one day (μιάς ημέρας διαστήματος)" compared

to the duration of "an entire aeon (τόν ὅλον αἰῶνα)"<sup>10</sup> and ponders upon scriptural temporal categories considering them as possibly alluding to actual "temporal *extensions* (διὰ χρονικῶν διαστημάτων)".<sup>11</sup>

It is apparently because time is regarded as an "extension" that Origen accordingly regards human life as a kind of "road (οδός)", stating that "this life is a road being walked by all men (οδός γάρ ὁ βίος, ὑπό πάντων ἀνθρώπων παροδεύμενος)";<sup>12</sup> it also in the same context, namely of the conception of time as "extension", that Origen speaks of "length of time (μήκος γάρ χρόνου)".<sup>13</sup> The same notion is also clearly denoted when he says that God dispenses all things in such a way so that "through time that the whole world returns to himself (καί διὰ χρόνου τό ὅλον επιστρέφειν πρὸς εαυτόν)".<sup>14</sup> It is significant here that this "through time" notion uses the preposition *διὰ*, which has exactly the meaning of "extension" (διάστημα).<sup>15</sup>

It is out of this conception of time as an "extension" that Origen regards man's motion in time as a mode of walking; thus he refers to those who "did not *walk* the *way* they ought to neither did they carry out the deeds they ought to" (οὔτε γάρ ἦν ἔδει πορείαν περὶπατήσεν οὔτε ἄς ἐχρήν πράξεις ἐπετέλεσεν);<sup>16</sup> and further he speaks about the *walking* towards the realization of "virtue" (δέον οδεύσαι ἐπὶ τό πέπειρον καὶ γλυκερίαν ποιῆσαι τὴν τῆς ἀρετῆς σταφυλήν).<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, he states that "he who is in the preliminary stage of exercise, beginning from the words of Jesus Christ, still *walks* along the tough road, which to beginners appears as steep, and he violently captures the kingdom of heavens which can be forcefully captured" (ἀρνάζει βία τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, βίαν υπομένουσαν).<sup>18</sup>

In *commJohn* the eschatological perception of acting in time is portrayed through the expression "the *road* which goes above all heavens" (τὴν φέρουσαν οδὸν ἐπὶ τὰ ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν).<sup>19</sup> In the same work he tries to interpret the passage of John 1,1 "In the beginning

was the Logos" (Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος)<sup>20</sup> and ponders upon the different meanings<sup>21</sup> of the term ἀρχή. When he reaches the signification of ἀρχή as a "beginning" he neither regards it as a beginning of movement of a (Platonic) "moving image of eternity" nor does he consider it as a beginning of some (Aristotelian) "number"; but he portrays the temporal signification of ἀρχή as "beginning" thus:

"This is something like a walking, it is like the beginning of a road or of a length; this is declared by the saying 'To commit just deeds is the beginning of a good road'.<sup>22</sup> As this 'good road' is very long, one should know that *first* comes action, which is denoted by 'to commit just deeds' and *then* comes contemplation; this is where I think that this road is *terminated* and this is the *end* of this road at the so called restoration because it is *then* that there will be no enemy remaining, because it is true that 'he must reign, *till* he hath put all enemies under his feet; the *last* enemy that shall be destroyed is death'.<sup>23</sup> It is *then* that there will be only one action of everyone towards God ...; and if one enquires diligently as to *when* those to whom the son reveals the father will know the father, he would find that *at present* one sees 'through a glass, darkly',<sup>24</sup> as he does *not yet* knows 'as he ought to know',<sup>25</sup> it would not be wrong to say that no one, even if he is an apostle or a prophet, knows the father, but (sc. the father will be known) *when* they become one, as the father and the son are one. And if someone thinks that we have deviated from our subject, because we have mentined all these things while our task was to clarify a certain meaning of ἀρχή, it must be shown that this deviation was necessary and useful; for if *ἀρχή, as 'beginning' is something like a walking, it is like the beginning of a road or of a length* and 'To commit just deeds is the beginning of a good road',<sup>26</sup> then everyone should know that each good *road* has as a kind of *beginning* 'to commit just deeds' and *after the beginning* comes contemplation and [sc. everyone should know] how this contemplation

comes".<sup>27</sup>

In this passage Origen provides his view of the temporal meaning of ἀρχή, as a "beginning". Furthermore, he alludes to the *raison d'être* of time itself (which we discuss in chapter 5), as he clearly implies that this temporal "road" is the way along which rational creatures will "walk" striving towards salvation.<sup>28</sup> In trying to enquire into the meaning of ἀρχή as "beginning" he states that this meaning of ἀρχή is "something like the beginning of a road".<sup>29</sup> It is also the use of this figure that clearly suggests his view of time as a kind of "extension" and certainly it is not accidental that he likens it to a road or a length. Although it is a purely *temporal* notion that he has to explain here, one can see that the text is full of *spatial* categories through which time is clearly portrayed as a kind of *extension*.<sup>30</sup>

The same figure, namely time as a kind of extension or road, is employed pertaining to God's action in time. Thus it is stated that God "carries out his benefaction to creatures not all at once but methodically and in order" (οὐδὴ καὶ τάξει).<sup>31</sup> What we translated as "methodically" is the term οὐδὴ which is the very word *road* in a Dative form. It is certainly not incidental that it was the Stoics who used this form of the term "road" in this sense.<sup>32</sup> For indeed, in that expression, the term "road" expresses what is done in due time -time itself fundamentally being perceived as an "extension".

So Origen himself makes large use of the term "οὐδὴς" (road) and the verb derived from it, namely "οὐδεύειν" (to walk) in order to indicate the time or the course of either creaturely or divine action.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, when he propounds his conception of creaturely action in time for a certain purpose, and states the *raison d'être* of time, he again uses the same expression, namely οὐδὴ καὶ τάξει in order to indicate the very reality of time.<sup>34</sup> The conception of time as an "extension" is again clearly indicated not only through the very terms

used, but also through the whole context at that point of the *commJohn*,  
35

Thus, whenever Origen refers to time, or he alludes to it by various temporal expressions, he always implies his fundamental conception of it, namely that time is a kind of extension. We say as "a kind" of extension, because, although he employed the original Stoic conception of time, he is not completely satisfied with the use of the term "extension" (διάστημα) alone; or, at least, he does not feel that this term alone fully expresses his conception of time. For although the term "extension" certainly is an essential conception of *what* time proper *is*, it in no way can be regarded as an exhaustive analysis of the question of time in itself; and it is true that the Stoics did not develop a comprehensive analysis of this question.

Plutarchus remarks that Stoics define time as an "extension of motion" (διάστημα κινήσεως) "and nothing else" (ἄλλο δ' οὐδέν); and he adds that they only "accidentally define" time (ἀπὸ συμβεβηκότος οριζόμενοι) while they "fail to consider its essence as well as its faculty" (τὴν δ' οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν δύναμιν οὐ συνορῶντες).<sup>36</sup>

Plotinus in the *Enneads* is similarly critical:

"But if someone were to say that the extension of motion is time, not in the sense of extension itself, but that in relation to which the motion has its extension, as if it was running along with it, what this is has not been stated. For it is obvious that time is that in which the motion has occurred. But this was what our discussion was trying to find from the beginning, what time essentially is; since this is like, in fact, the same as, an answer to the question 'What is time?' which says that it is extension of motion in time. What, then, is this extension which you call time and put outside the proper extension of the motion? Then, again, on the other side, the person who puts the extension in the motion itself, will be hopelessly perplexed about where to put the dimension of

rest. For something else could rest for as long as something was moved, and you would say that the time in each case was the same, as being, obviously, different from both. What, then, is this extension, and what is its nature? For it cannot be spatial, since this also lies outside movement."<sup>37</sup>

It is obvious that this Plotinus' criticism refers to the oldest conception of time, namely to that of Zeno's; yet he further extends his remarks to the later Stoics, who defined time as "an extension which is alongside following the world", namely to Chrysippus -though Plotinus does not name any Stoic philosopher at all:

"As for calling it an accompaniment of motion, this does not explain at all what it is, nor has the statement any content before it is said what this accompanying thing is, for perhaps just this might turn out to be time. But we must consider whether this accompaniment comes after motion, or at the same time as it, or before it -if there is any kind of accompaniment which comes before, for whichever may be said, it is said to be in time. If this is so, time will be an accompaniment of motion in time."<sup>38</sup>

These remarks of Plutarchus and Plotinus are not unjustified. For, in fact, the Stoics do not offer an exhaustive theoretical analysis of their original conception of time as an "extension"; yet it is neither accidental nor is it due to negligence; on the contrary, it can be said that it is a constitutive element of the Stoic view of time not to elaborate too much on their original conception of time as an "extension". This is a direct result of their general view that it is only "bodies" which are "real" -as "real" considered only what is "acting" or "suffering". Thus the Stoics would regard time as "real" only if they had accepted the presupposition that time is a "body"; but since time obviously is not a body, the spontaneous Stoic reaction on the first place would be to reject the fact the time "exists" -which is equally absurd as

contrary at least to immediate human psychological experience. Thus the Stoics solved the problem by accepting that there are four "incorporeals", namely time (ὁ χρόνος), space (ὁ χώρος), speech (τὸ ἄεκτόν), the void (τὸ κενόν). It is apparent though that in Stoic philosophy, and its materialism, the term "incorporeal" is a cause of embarrassment. Subsequently, a further analysis of the question of time would be a matter of more perplexity and therefore they avoided that. To Stoics time has always remained a "something" which stands between "being" and "non-being".

The Stoics in general distinguished three degrees of reality: The ὄντα (beings) were regarded of full reality and such were only bodies. Incorporeals were called τινά (somethings) but they were not regarded as ὄντα. Below them it was the οὐτινα (nothings) which were mere conceptions (ἐννοήματα). Time belongs to the second grade of reality.<sup>39</sup> Another distinction of degrees of reality is between what is ὑφ' ἑστώς (subsisting) and what is ὄν (being); the former seems to correspond to τινά (somethings).<sup>40</sup>

This is why Proclus remarks that Plato's conception of time was far too different from that of the Stoics or the Peripatetics. For to the Stoics "time was one of what they called incorporeals, which are despised by them as inactive and not being, and existing only in bare mind".<sup>41</sup>

It is reasonable to assume that Origen knew both the Stoic treatment of time as well as the criticism of that. We can guess that not only because of Origen's erudition in general, not even only because of his profound knowledge of Stoic thought (as it is outstandingly revealed in *Ce/s*), but also because Plotinus was contemporary to Origen (about 20 years younger than him -not to mention the strong possibility of their being personally acquainted) that Origen should be aware of the afore-mentioned criticism of Plotinus against the Stoic treatment of

time.

We should nevertheless note that the above-mentioned criticism of Proclus applies more to the old Stoicism and not so much to that which is almost contemporary to Origen. This latter Stoicism has mainly been expressed by Marcus Aurelius.

Regarding the conception of time, V. Goldschmidt<sup>42</sup> asserts that Marcus Aurelius is actually a follower of Chrysippus. He believes that Marcus's only divergence from old Stoic conception is his pessimism on the subject. J. Rist,<sup>43</sup> however, holds that in Marcus's era (which is shortly before Origen's one) the problem of time had a totally different content from that in the early Stoics. To Zeno and Chrysippus, time is a problem of Physics; the problems concerning time arise from the natural observation of bodies; therefore this problem is not related to morality. It is from this point of view that they consider it as a second class problem.

To Marcus, time is itself a moral problem. What is the sense that moral life may have since all actions and deeds will vanish into triviality? This was Marcus's impasse and this is the point where time itself is related to ethics. Nowhere in his *Meditations* does Marcus refer to any definitions of time, like those offered by earlier Stoic such as Zeno or Chrysippus or Apollodorus; neither is the definition of time in itself that which interests Marcus when he deals with this problem. It has been argued that in Marcus's time Stoicism had degenerated into an arid moralism. J. Rist contends that this is a misleading generalization, yet he concedes that Marcus Aurelius, who knew many of the theories of the early Stoa, had lost the sense of their import. Rist asserts that the fundamental interrelationship of ethics and physics has eluded Marcus.<sup>44</sup>

Origen meets Stoicism exactly at the time when this philosophy, as expressed by Marcus Aurelius, displays symptoms of degeneration and stalemate; yet he was well acquainted with early Stoic thought as well.



This was his advantage; for he knew the whole process of thought and the evolution of ideas which had at his time led this philosophy to degeneration and stalemate.<sup>45</sup> At the same time, he knew the Neoplatonic criticism against Stoic treatment of time.

It is plausible that Origen adopted the fundamental Stoic conception of time proper as "extension" only because it stood in agreement with his Christian belief as a whole. As the question of time (especially at his era) was not just a problem of physics, he obviously would not be satisfied with the overall Stoic treatment of the question. Hence, in giving his own account of time, he had to avoid the original Stoic failures. Besides, he had to elaborate the notion of time from a Christian point of view. As a matter of fact, he ploughed his own way by taking some decisive steps towards both these directions.

To Stoics time is an "extension" related to the motion of the world; but in Origen's view the term "world" has a totally different meaning, namely a broader one, yet it is also a "material" world, as we have seen. Once Origen has adopted the original conception of time as an "extension", the question is how he considers the relation of this "extension" to his "world".

**The term συμπαρατείνειν.** We have already discussed the precise way in which Origen uses his language; we have seen how scrupulous he is both in offering substantial and philological exegeses of scriptural passages as well as in expressing his own thoughts; and how conscious he is of the philosophical and theological implications of the terms he uses in articulating his own views. The same scrutiny and sophistication is found in the way Origen refers to time.

There is one term constantly applied to time. This is the verb "simparetktimesthe" (συμπαρατείνειν) which means "to be co-extended alongside with". This is the term used whenever he refers to time or he wants to denote a temporal function.

Thus a passage in *expProv* reads as follows: "By the term aeon he means the period of human life, in like a way that Paul says; 'I will eat no meat in the aeon, so that I will not occasion a temptation for my brother';<sup>46</sup> he has named as aeon what is co-extended alongside with (τὸ γὰρ συμπαραεκτεινόμενον) the structure of his life (τῇ συστάσει τῆς ζωῆς αὐτοῦ)".<sup>47</sup> Similar to this expression, Origen speaks of time as "measured alongside with (παραμετρούμενος) everyone's life."<sup>48</sup> It should be noticed that, in the passage above, Origen refers to time using not a noun at all; he just uses the participle *συμπαραεκτεινόμενον* as an adjective which is a predicate of time itself.<sup>49</sup>

The same predicate is used in another case as well: "...and when it is said to him (sc. to the son of God) the word 'You are my Son, I have begotten you today',<sup>50</sup> to him 'today' is always (αἰ); for to God there is not any evening and I think that there is no morning too, but the time, so to speak (ὡς οὕτως εἰπω), which is co-extended alongside with (ὁ συμπαραεκτείνων) his unbegotten and timeless (αἰδῶ) life, this is the day named as today, on which the son has been begotten; for there can be neither a beginning nor a day of his birth."<sup>51</sup>

It is obvious that this passage does not introduce any notion of a "time" of God; not only because here Origen again explicitly stresses the timelessness of the being of God; but also because he uses the term "time" consciously in a loose sense and this is why in using the term "time" he immediately adds the expression "so to speak (ὡς οὕτως εἰπω)". The task facing Origen at this point is to provide an exegesis of the term "today" as found in the above-mentioned passage from the Psalms; what Origen actually does is to interpret the term "today" in a way which is in agreement with his fundamental view of the timelessness of God. The task is hard indeed; yet Origen copes with it in a twofold way; first, he again explicitly stresses the timelessness of God's life; secondly, he actually considers "today" as the timeless environment of

divine life, in the same sense that he has done it in the passage from his "Homilies on Jeremiah". Besides, in enunciating the notion of relativity of the conception time, he states: "And you should see that we may consider as day the whole of the present aeon, which is long with respect to us, but it is short and consisting just of a few years with respect to the life of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit."<sup>52</sup> It is interesting to remark that he compares human *time* to divine *life*, not to any "divine time" whatsoever.

This articulation of Origen has exerted a profound influence upon his successors, who, obviously found this term particularly useful and expressive -and so they employed it verbatim. However, there is a very substantial difference, which has eluded those who employed his terminology. Origen *nowhere* in his entire work says that the *divine life* (which is regarded as being expressed allegorically as "today") is called *αἰών*. The scriptural term αἰώνιος (eternal -in the sense of timeless) is certainly applied to God throughout Origen's work. But he nowhere affirms that the divine life should be applied the term αἰών, which after all is a Platonic definition. The reader should particularly notice that, in the passage above, Origen uses no noun at all when he refers to the divine life. He just uses the adjective *συμπαρεκτείνων* as an obvious metaphor. On the contrary, his successors employed this definition in order to define the divine life as αἰών.

Thus Gregory of Nazianzus states that "aeon is not time nor is it a part of time ... but what for us is time ... this is aeon to the timeless, namely what is extended along side with beings."<sup>53</sup> This was in the end of the Fourth century. As late as the Eighth century, John of Damascus employs the same terminology of Origen, but follows the definition of Gregory. He recognises that the term "aeon" has many significations (such as a lifetime, or a certain period of long time). Regarding the signification of "aeon to come" (αἰών ὁ μέλλων) he states that this

"endless state after the resurrection .. is not time neither is it a part of time ... but this is what is co-extended along side with the timeless; ... thus what time is to the temporal beings, this is aeon to the timeless."<sup>54</sup>

The *repetition* of the terminology established by Origen is striking indeed. Yet the *distortion* of Origen's articulation forced by these authors towards an un-Origenist (and virtually Platonic) direction should not pass unnoticed. For there is a fundamental difference between him and those who used his articulations. Origen *does not* say that the *συνπαρεκτεινόμενον τοῖς αἰδίοις* (which virtually indicates the divine life, the "today" in the passage above) constitutes a definition of αἰών. For what Origen regards as αἰών is a purely *natural* reality, a spatio-temporal reality as explicated by him in the clearest possible terms through an *ad hoc* definition.<sup>55</sup> On the contrary, both Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus regard the term αἰών as the term indicating the divine life, namely they regard αἰών as a *super-natural* reality. Effectively, both, in letter and in content, employ the Platonic and Neoplatonic conception of αἰών, according to which αἰών *is not time* though it has a *similarity*, an analogy, to time.

It is then an irony (or a tragedy?) that these authors (who are supposed to be the exponents of "orthodoxy") find it convenient to employ Origen's original terminology and yet distort it towards a Platonic definition of αἰών which is directly opposed to Origen's *natural* (and entirely un-Platonic) conception of αἰών -and yet it was Origen who was accused as a "Platonist".

At any rate, in Origen's thought, everything referring to time is susceptible of being predicated by the term *συνπαρεκτείνων* or *συνπαρεκτεινόμενος*. This predicate is used in order to speak of either time itself, or of duration or even to denote a presence in time. In his *commMatt* he refers to the incapability of human nature to reach a perfect apprehension of God and he states: "For we cannot hold an

enduring (διαρκή) and co-extended alongside (συνπαρεκτεινομένην) memory of the nature of apperceptions (θεωρημάτων) because of their vast multitude (τῷ πλήθει).<sup>56</sup>

What the term "co-extended alongside with" suggests here is a temporal apprehension which would be extended throughout the length of a lifetime, an apprehension which would have duration; this is why in the passage above the terms "enduring" (διαρκή) and "co-extended alongside" (συνπαρεκτεινομένην) are synonyms.

Even the temporal presence itself is denoted through the same term "simparektenesthe". In the *comm. John* Origen expounds his opinion that the Logos of God is present both in divine timelessness and in the temporal world; it is exactly this notion of the presence of Logos in time that is denoted by the term "simparektenesthe". It is stated that Christ "is so powerful as to be invisible (αόρατος) due to his divine nature, to be present into each individual man and to be also co-extended alongside with the whole world; this is what is declared by the 'He has stood in the midst of you'".<sup>57</sup>

According to the fundamental conception of the term "invisible", Origen uses this term in order to denote the divine nature of the Logos and, again, he uses the term "co-extended alongside with" (συνπαρεκτεινόμενος) in order to denote the presence of the Logos in time. We should emphasize that this latter term is referred to time only, not to the whole space-time.<sup>58</sup> For Origen clearly denotes the presence of the Logos into the world by the expression "and in the whole world" (καί ὅλω τῷ κόσμῳ); it is through the term "co-extended alongside with" (συνπαρεκτεινόμενος) that the presense of the Logos in time is portrayed.

In this case one might ask whether Origen himself makes the distinction between time and world. The answer is that he does. It is again through the use of the term "co-extended alongside with" that he

not only differentiates time from the "structure of the world" but he defines time in itself.

Thus, in explaining the term of Paul "the æon of this world"<sup>59</sup> he states that what would be understood by this expression is "time which is extended alongside with the structure of this world from the beginning to the end (τόν συμπαρατεκνιζόμενον χρόνον τῇ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μέχρι τέλους κατασκευή).<sup>60</sup> So it is Origen himself who makes the intellectual distinction between time itself and the "structure of this world" in the same way that he distinguishes between "time" of Paul's lifetime from the "structure of his life".<sup>61</sup> What these distinctions actually do is to introduce an intellectual abstraction, illustrating just the "structure" of the world, or the "structure of life", conceived (if such a conception can be possible) without any existence of time.

In the same work of Origen uses the term "co-extended alongside with" in order to denote what exists in time. In interpreting the passage of Paul "according to the riches of his grace wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence"<sup>62</sup> he comments as follows:

"And thus the whole richness of the grace of God, which was abounded to the saints, has from a certain beginning to be 'nourished' and 'increaseth' [Col.2,19] and is multiplied in such a way that either one has these afore-said gifts co-extended alongside according to his merits or he lacks them in as much as he fails to do what he has to do".<sup>63</sup>

This passage is of particular significance, as Origen here alludes to his conception of the state before the fall as well as to his conception of the beginning of time; it is quite remarkable that the expression "from a certain beginning (ἀπό τινος ἀρχῆς)" contains the term ἀρχή in a twofold sense: it indicates the wisdom from which those who deserve it are "nourished"<sup>64</sup> and it also indicates the fact that the fall marks the "beginning" of time and it is from that "beginning"

onwards that the grace of God is "co-extended alongside with" the world in order to help it towards its restoration by its own free will.<sup>65</sup> In this case, therefore, the term "co-extended alongside with" signifies the bestowal of God's gifts upon creatures within time; and it more specifically alludes to Origen's notion that those gifts may be bestowed upon a creature for a period of time (and in such a case this creature does have those gifts "co-extended alongside with") while for another period of time they are not, because of the creature's own merits. Thus it is through the temporal implication of the term "co-extended alongside with" that Origen articulates his assertion of the non-permanent bestowal of divine grace upon creatures and, subsequently, his view of time as a *means* where a dialectical relation between God and creatures takes place, as we shall argue later in this work.

The use of the term "simparektenesthe" by Origen is very significant innovation towards the establishment of a terminology of time. For it provides certain crucial elements of his conception of time and especially of *what* he believes that time proper to be. In the final analysis, Origen does not abandon the original conception of time as it has been articulated by the Stoics, namely the conception of time proper as an "extension"; yet he further elaborates, refines and clarifies the relevant terminology in elaborating his own Christian conception of time. For Origen does not only provide an answer as to *what* time proper *is* but he also handles the question of the relation of time to the "structure of this world".

Certainly, the Stoics Chryssippus and Apollodorus had made an attempt to denote the relation of time, as an "extension", to the world, by using the term παρακολουθούν διάστημα.<sup>66</sup> The term παρακολουθούν, however, means "that which accompanies following". Hence this term itself implies a notion of "coming behind or after"; in this sense,

therefore, time is regarded as "standing beside" the "world",<sup>67</sup> yet "following" it. Indeed, the Stoics appear to be uncertain as to whether time was created "together with" the "world" (σύν αὐτῷ) or "after it" (μετ' αὐτόν); and subsequently they appear uncertain as to whether time "has the same age with the world" (ισήλικα τοῦ κόσμου γεγονέναι) or time is "younger" than the world (ἢ νεώτερον ἐκείνου).<sup>68</sup> On this uncertainty Philo follows the Stoics; the only thing he seems to assert for sure is that time could not be "older" than the world; "for it is unbecoming a philosopher to dare affirm" that.<sup>69</sup> The Stoics regard god as the creator of time yet they consider the world as the "father" of time<sup>70</sup> because time is being realized out of the motion of the world. Therefore it is not at all accidental that they used the term παρακοινοῦσθαι διάστημα, the term composed of the preposition παρά which means "beside" and the participle κοινοῦσθαι which means "following". It is then obvious that the Stoics have never been able to overcome the difficulty of exactly expressing the relation between time proper and the world.

Origen himself has been able to articulate his own conception of time by using the verb συμπαρατείνόμενος or "to be extended alongside with".

As a matter of fact, this verb did not exist in classical Greek,<sup>71</sup> it appeared during the Hellenistic period and especially in the first centuries of Christianity. Among Origen's predecessors it was Galen,<sup>72</sup> Asclepiodorus Tacticus (1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.) and Cleomedes (Mathematician, 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.) who had already used the term. The meaning applied to this was that of "to have the same extension with something else". Of the Stoics it was Marcus Aurelius who had used the term συμπαρατείνειν<sup>73</sup> in the sense of "extending parallel to" and therefore "to contrast" or "to compare". Certainly the term was used in the subsequent centuries and Suidas the Lexicographer (960 A.D.) included



the term in his lexicon as συμπαρατείνεισθαι.

Yet it was Origen who first used the term συμπαρατείνεισθαι and συμπαρατείνειν in order to express a conception of time proper as well as the relation of time to the world. And we shall argue that both this conception of time itself as well as his terminology have exerted a profound and decisive influence upon Origen's Christian successors -an influence not acknowledged, not even suspected, hitherto. Let us then see what is the conception of time proper as expressed by the term συμπαρατείνεισθαι.

This term is a compound word consisting of the words "σύν-", "-παρά-", "-ἐκ-" and "-τείνεισθαι". The first three are prepositions; the fourth is a verb. What we have, therefore, is a verb predicated by three prepositions.

The main body of the term is certainly the verb "τείνεισθαι" which means "to be stretched" or "to be spread". The preposition "ἐκ" means "out" and the verb "ἐκ-τείνεισθαι" means "to be stretched out" or "to be extended".

At this point Origen maintains the fundamental Stoic conception of time as an "extension"; for the Greek word for "extension" (which is ἔκτασις) is exactly the noun coming out of the verb "ἐκ-τείνεισθαι".

The further step of Origen is to employ the preposition "-παρά-" which means "beside". We have already seen that although Zeno does not seem to employ this notion, we find the preposition "παρά-" in the terminology of Chrysippus and Apollodorus, namely in the term "παρ-ακορουθούν διάστημα". Yet Origen has discarded the term "παρ-ακορουθούν" because of its implication that time "follows", as it were, the world. This is why he does not use it at all.

In contrast, he maintained the preposition "-παρά-" which renders the verb "-παρ-εκ-τείνεισθαι" which means what "extends beside".

Finally Origen adds the preposition "σύν" which means "with" in

order to depict his conception of time as an "extension" which "is extended" "beside" and yet "with" the world, namely accompanying, not following.

There is a contradistinction which should be made at this point: Plotinus, too, held the notion that time "runs together *with* life and keeps pace in its course (ἡ συνθεῖ καὶ συντρέχει).<sup>74</sup> In his mythological portrayal of the beginning of temporality he speaks of "a restlessly active nature which wanted to control itself and be on its own, and chose to seek for more than its present state, this moved, and time moved with it;".<sup>75</sup> Although in the original Greek text the term "with" (as Armstrong translates it here) is not actually used, it is nevertheless stated that "once this nature moved, time moved, too" (ἐκινήθη μὲν αὐτή, ἐκινήθη δέ καὶ αὐτός); yet the notion of "accompanying" is implied and it becomes clearer once the above-mentioned passage is taken into account, too.

The difference, however, lies in this: The Neoplatonic conception of time's being *with* the world maintains the fundamental Platonic characteristic of a "dynamic" view of time. Time is perceived to *move* itself. In Plato it is a *moving* image, in Plotinus time *runs*. Certainly the entire Plotinian perception of time is a "dynamic" one, due to the fact that time proper originates from the "motion" of the Soul. By contrast, Origen does not hold such a conception of time. The notion of *with* does not suggest any motion of time proper at all. This difference from the Platonic thought is due to the conception of time as "extension".

This is the fundamental structure of Origen's term about time. Let us then see the implication of the steps that Origen has taken towards this direction.

Although he accepts the fundamental Stoic view of time as a διάστημα (extension), he uses a verb which has a completely different root, namely the verb τείνεσθαι. We assume that he did so because he

wanted to circumvent somehow the purely spatial notion implied by the term διάστημα. For he knows perfectly well (as undoubtedly the Stoics did, as well) that this "extension" is not a spatial one; the term itself is nothing but a metaphor. Since, therefore, this is not a spatial "extension", what is the relation of this "extension" to the Space itself—that is, to what he names through the term "structure of the world"?

The Stoics undoubtedly were conscious of the fact that time is something different from space;<sup>76</sup> they knew of course that this "extension" had no spatial significance. But by their terminology they have not achieved to provide an accurate account of *what* time proper *is*. This is exactly the point on which Plotinus focused his criticism against the Stoics. Zeno seems to have thought that it is enough to take as obvious that the term "extension" is just a metaphor. Chrysippus and Apollodorus simply added the participle παρὰκοῦρου ( "being beside and following") which is not a very substantial contribution, as it confuses rather than elucidates the relation of time proper to space proper. And, as we said, it is not accidental that the scrupulous Origen discards this term παρὰκοῦρου altogether. What he does instead is to make a simultaneous use of the prepositions "σύν" ("with") and "παρά" ("beside"). Thus, in Origen's view, time is a sort of "extension" which is extended "along with" space yet it is "beside" it. Time is something different from space yet it is extended alongside together with it; there is no notion of "following" one another; they are just being "together".

The adoption of the Stoic conception of time as an "extension", completed by the introduction of the term συμπαρατείνεσθαι by Origen is a highly meaningful and accurate portrayal of his conception of *what* time proper is as well as its exact relation to space proper and this is why it had an enormous impact upon the Christian writers who lived after Origen's time.

G. Florovski<sup>77</sup> refers to the creation of the world and time

asserting that it was with Augustine that this relation was clearly portrayed. What he is unaware of, however, is that it was Origen who introduced the concrete perception of the relation between space and time. Florovski asserts that it was Augustine who first clearly pronounced that the world was not created "in time" but "together with" time.<sup>78</sup> The truth is, however, that before Augustine it was Origen who had already articulated the notion that time came into existence when the world came into existence. As for the passages of Augustine cited here, one should notice that he makes the distinction between the "world" and "time" whereas Origen had made the conceptual distinction between "the structure of the world" and "time". In this way he has not only preceded Augustine but has also provided a more sophisticated articulation of his perception.

It would be not an exaggeration at all to say that the impact of the conceptual as well as terminological elaboration by Origen established a Christian view of the *essence* of time. Not only the term δίδωσθαι but also the term συμπαρακτείνων which Origen adopted in order to portray the subtle perception of time as an element of the make-up of the world as well as its relation to space, was adopted by later Christian writers; thus one can clearly see the decisive impact of Origen's conception of time upon his successors.

Gregory of Nyssa,<sup>79</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus,<sup>80</sup> Basil of Caesarea,<sup>81</sup> Theodoretus Cyrrenensis,<sup>82</sup> Hesychius of Sinai,<sup>83</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria,<sup>84</sup> Maximus Confessor,<sup>85</sup> Cyrillus of Alexandria,<sup>86</sup> John Chrysostom,<sup>87</sup> Procopius Gazaeus,<sup>88</sup> John of Damascus,<sup>89</sup> are some of them who echoed what Origen established as a Christian terminology for speaking of time.

Nevertheless, the term συμπαρακτείνεσθαι alone, although decisive, can in no case be regarded as an exhaustive analysis of time in itself. We should then enquire whether Origen made any steps towards

portraying his views of what Plutarhus calls as "essence and faculty"<sup>90</sup> of time.

**Time is a creature.** In formulating his opinion about the relation of time to space, we saw that Origen regards time as something which is extended alongside with the structure of the world; yet he has no hesitation at all in affirming that time itself is a creature. In his view, there was a state that time did not exist at all; "... for time cannot be found when the third and the fourth conceptions of the Logos did not exist at all";<sup>91</sup> and "... before any existing of time and aeon 'in the beginning was the Logos' and 'the Logos was with God'".<sup>92</sup> Time itself is regarded as something "outside" Trinity.<sup>93</sup>

Therefore, there was a state in which time did not exist. Since time does exist now, it would be plausible to infer that time is regarded as having come into being out of non-being; yet there is no need to infer it dialectically; for it is Origen himself who enunciates this opinion: He refers to Ps.54,20 "God shall hear and will humiliate them, he who is before the aeons; for they have no changes, as they fear not God" and his comment upon it is this:

"Since everything has been made through him, it is well said that he exists before the aeons. And this is whence we learn that aeons have come to being out of non-being".<sup>94</sup>

In *commJohn* it is pointed out that the expression "through whom" (as in John,1,3) "is never stated in the first place, but is always employed in the second place".<sup>95</sup> This assertion is grounded by appealing to various scriptural passages. One of these passages is the Heb.1,1-2, according to which God "has in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the aeons (τοὺς αἰῶνας)". Origen quotes Paul as "teaching us that God made the aeons through the son, and by making the aeons it is the only-begotten whom the 'through whom' is referred to".<sup>96</sup> This is the

context in which Origen attacks Heracleon for holding that "neither the aeon nor what is in the aeon has been made through the Logos, holding that they have been made before the Logos".<sup>97</sup>

There should be no doubt that it is time itself what Origen means by the term "aeon"; for he regards "aeons" consisting of "years" and "days", as he accordingly states: "He who has learned the ineffable and secret things of God, he also has the memories of the past aeons, and of the years in them and of the old days which comprise them."<sup>98</sup> Accordingly, at another point he speaks of "days of the aeon",<sup>99</sup> and elsewhere he states: "It is good to say that one should pray to God day after day, and to sing praising the name of God in the aeon of the aeon". Regarding this Psalm of David (namely, Ps.61,9) [the expression] "to sing praising the name of God is understood as extended (παρεκτείνειν) until the next aeon whereas the expression "to pray to him" refers to the time, which comprises days, namely the time which is counted alongside (παράμετρούμενος) everybody's lifetime. "Therefore, as long as we are in life let us pray, so that we become able to sing praising the name of God in the aeon of aeon."<sup>100</sup>

So Origen employs the term αἰών in order to indicate time itself and, in *de Or.*, he speaks of the "day of so great an aeon" (τῆς τοῦ τηλικούτου αἰῶνος ἡμέρας), the term αἰών clearly indicating a temporal duration.<sup>101</sup>

Accordingly, in the *commEph.*, he affirms that the term "aeon of this world" indicates "the time which is extended alongside with the structure of this world from the beginning to the end"; and it is in the same place that Origen appeals to the same scriptural passage, namely Heb. 1,3, in order to say that the expression "through whom he has made the aeons" may well indicate that the aeons "is a creature (δόξει κτίσμα ἄρχειν τοὺς αἰῶνας)". Nevertheless, he does not fail to stress that it is again from Paul that we learn that this "creature" is not a living one (as

the expression of Paul, in Gal.1,4, "that he might deliver us from this present evil aeon" might be taken to suggest); in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians it is explicitly stated that the days are not living beings (ἡμῶν ἔχει τὴν ἀντεπειχίαν τὸ ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Γαλάτας ἐπιστολῆς ρητόν, ἐπεὶ καὶ περὶ ἡμερῶν λέγεται, τῶν ὁμολογουμένων ὡς οὐκ οὐσῶν ἐμψύχων).<sup>102</sup>

In contrast to Marcus Aurelius, Origen does not personify time. Such a view of time derives from his overall conception of it as well as from the purposes of his thought. In one case that he seems to personify time, it is obvious that it is just a literary expression. Thus in *de Job* Origen comments on the passage Job,32,9 "It is not those who have lived long that are wise" as follows:

"He says that it is not necessary that only old men are wise; but it is possible to listen to something important even since youth. For if time makes people wise, God does so much more".<sup>103</sup>

Even in that case, however, the attitude of Origen towards time is totally different from that of Marcus Aurelius'. Marcus personifies time in order to prove that it is a "destroyer". He stands before the reality with a feeling of melancholy and frustration. He believed in the recurrence of identical worlds<sup>104</sup> and so held that nothing is created and nothing is lost.<sup>105</sup> His beliefs are often combined with an acute sense of the transience of things and events, subjected by fatal vicissitudes to perpetual change,<sup>106</sup> he endeavours to "love" this poor and heavy destiny<sup>107</sup> but actually he is deeply depressed by what he sees as vanity and nullity of man's state on this "clod of earth", namely the world.<sup>108</sup>

By contrast, in the above-mentioned passage, Origen personifies time in order to imply a benevolent influence of it upon men. In any event, he explicitly rejects what he calls "the mythology about aeons" (τὴν περὶ τῶν αἰώνων μυθολογίαν)<sup>109</sup> obviously alluding to the tales of the Gnostics.<sup>110</sup>

Thus Origen is clear in enunciating his view that time itself is a

creature. As God "made aeons through the son"<sup>111</sup> time is a creature which "came into being out of non-being"<sup>112</sup> when "God made beings out of non-beings"<sup>113</sup> since "the holy Trinity brought ... everything ... into being out of non-being".<sup>114</sup>

On this point O. Cullmann's assertion is that the term "aeon" (as in Heb.1,2) means only "worlds" and that "aeon" has only an "extensional" meaning, namely that all God did was to *arrange* time in an order of consecutive "aeons" (the number of which, in Cullmann's view, is three). His view is that time "was not created".<sup>115</sup> But this is exactly a purely Platonic way of thinking, to which Origen is essentially opposed. It makes little difference that Cullmann holds *time* as non-created whereas Plato held *matter* (which means virtually "space" itself) to be uncreated. In either case there is "something" which is perceived as a "compulsory" eternal companion of God, namely as always existing. Cullmann was obsessed with his preoccupation to avoid any spatial reference which would be regarded as a Greek "contamination"<sup>116</sup> of Christianity. In this effort he virtually followed Plato's way of thinking. That Plato would speak of some kind of everlastingness of space whereas Cullman spoke of a kind of everlastingness of time itself does not constitute a substantial difference. In both cases, the essence of thinking is virtually the same. For like Plato, who held that the world is uncreated and the Demiurge just put matter in order, Cullman takes the view that all God did was to put a pre-existing time in order, namely to arrange it into "aeons". Plato held that matter always existed and the Demiourge established "order" and "time" in it. Cullman asserts that time always existed and God established "order" (namely, "aeons") and a "world" in it. Thus what Cullmann does is nothing more than a "reversed" version of a fundamentally Platonic conception and a Platonic way of thinking.<sup>117</sup>

Certainly it is not the only point where Platonic way of thinking is



found in a work which is supposed to have as a main purpose to contrast from what is thought to be Greek. For it is Cullmann who speaks of the "flesh" as the "great opponent of the spirit"<sup>118</sup> and affirms that the "communion with Christ" becomes more essentially active "if we get rid of this natural body as soon as possible".<sup>119</sup> We do not criticize the actual content of affirmations like these. We only note that it is quite ironical that they are affirmations of a writer in a work in which Greek thought, and especially Platonism, are regarded as a kind of dangerous "contamination" of Christian way of thinking.

When Origen affirms that time in itself is a creature he actually goes beyond this Platonic way of thinking. He was able to do so because he regarded the Greek schools of thought just as something "outside" the Christian way of thinking. But he was not haunted by the Greek thought regarding it as a "danger" or something "contaminating". He was able to employ this stance for the simple reason that (in contrast to many modern scholars) he actually *knew* in depth the Greek attitudes. This calm and clear-sighted familiarity with this thought was what allowed him to face Celsus -and yet it is in that work that he points out: "We have employed the stance not to despise good teachings, even if their authors are outside the faith yet teaching well, nor to raise objections against them, nor to seek to overthrow statements which are sound".<sup>120</sup> This is only a small example of what we said in the Introduction about Origen's iron will coexisting with peaceful and conciliatory spirit of scientific education and erudition.

Origen had the *feeling* (if not the clear conception) of the reality of space-time; yet he did not object to this perception (which is already justified by modern science) just because this perception contained the notion of "space". To him, this notion was neither "contamination" nor a "danger". Hence he was not obsessed with trying to avoid any spatial category and deal only with temporal ones.<sup>121</sup> Thus, he also holds that

the term "aeon" may either mean time or space -but strictly speaking, it actually suggests both time and space, namely the reality of space-time, as we argue in chapter 4.

In view of this fact, G. Florovski is totally mistaken when he says that it was Augustine that "discovered" that "time should be regarded as a creature".<sup>122</sup> For as our discussion shows it was Origen who established the view that time in itself is a creature. Accordingly, R. Sorabji is equally mistaken when he attributes the idea that "there was no time before the creation"<sup>123</sup> to Augustine. He points out that this is "the best of solutions offered by Jews and Christians"<sup>124</sup> to the so-called "why not sooner?" argument about the creation. It certainly was a brilliant notion, yet it was Origen himself who enunciated this idea. On this point Augustine was but a follower of Origen.

What we see, nevertheless, is something more than the conception of time as a creature. In Origen's view time is a "being" which was made out of "non-being";<sup>125</sup> and this leads to the conclusion that Origen considers time as real. He uses the term *γεγονόσιν*<sup>126</sup> which means "have been made"; and this is the term that Origen uses to enunciate the reality of creation's being; he states, for example, that God "... is a creator because of the beings (*γεγονότα*) brought into being out of non-being";<sup>127</sup> he also says that "God as creator is in all beings (*γεγονόσιν*)".<sup>128</sup>

Thus Origen states that time itself is a *being* -in his thought there is nothing of the Stoic doubts and embarrasements on this subject. Accordingly he holds that it is a being of *full reality*; and he also articulates his notion that time is a being of full reality which is a *creature*, created by God together with all creation and it is part of the make-up of the whole world.

**Time is a continuum.** Whether time is a continuum or not was a matter of dispute in antiquity. The Stoics in general were rejecting the

doctrine of Xenocrates about "atomic-time-elements"<sup>129</sup> which was an Epicurean view in general. In view of Origen's contempt for Epicureans and the fact that both Aristotelians and Stoics (in spite of their other differences) regarded time as continuous, it would be plausible to expect that Origen regarded time as a continuum. Besides, this is a direct consequence of the very conception of time as "extension" and certainly the continuity of time is a necessary element of Origen's conception of it, as we shall also discuss in chapter 3, §4, treating his notion of "kairos". However, that time is a continuum can be also drawn from his own expressions. He makes the distinction of what is distinct and discontinuous from what is continuum; to the counting of the former he applies the term "number" whereas he applies the term "measure" to the latter. Thus, when he speaks of rational creatures (which are distinct beings) he uses the term "number" and in speaking of "matter" he uses the term "measure":

"Moreover when the scripture says that God created all things 'by number and measure',<sup>130</sup> we shall be right in applying the term 'number' to rational creatures or minds by this very reason that they are so many as can be provided for and ruled and controlled by the providence of God; whereas 'measure' will correspondingly apply to bodily matter, which we must believe to have been created by God in such quantity as he knew would be sufficient for the ordering of the world. These then are the objects which we must believe were created by God in the beginning, that is, before everything else."<sup>131</sup>

He also uses the term "number" when he refers to "men", who are individual beings;<sup>132</sup> and he again stresses that God "made all things by number and measure; for to God there is nothing either without end or without measure";<sup>133</sup> and he concludes: "Every created being, therefore, is distinguished in God's sight by its being confined within a certain number and measure, that is, either number in the case of rational

beings or measure in the case of bodily matter."<sup>134</sup>

It is against this background that Origen applies the term "measure" to time, clearly suggesting that it is a continuum. This is why he accordingly declares; "the rest of things, however, which are external to the Trinity, must be measured by ages and periods of time";<sup>135</sup> and phrases such as "immeasurable ages" can be found in some points of the *Princ.*<sup>136</sup> The same conception of time is found in *frMatt*, where time is clearly stated as continuum (διηλεκές) and action in time, until the end of it, is stated to have a character of action "in continuity" (διηλεκώς).<sup>137</sup>

It is therefore Origen's explicit statements as well as his terminology itself that denotes his view of time as a continuum. But it is not only that; as with the Stoics,<sup>138</sup> it is the very conception of time as an "extension" that entails a conception of time as a continuum which is particularly held to be "extended alongside with" the world. Finally, it is the conception of the close connexion of time to space, namely, the reality of space-time out of which time is regarded as a continuum; and this conception of continuity of time is a basic one in the articulation of his views of judgement as well as of prolongation of time, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

**Time as a dimension.** Origen adopted the fundamental Stoic conception of time, being himself aware of the difficulties this question was causing to Stoic thought. The Stoics in general considered time as incorporeal.<sup>139</sup> They would not easily say that time does not exist, not only because there is the psychological and phenomenological experience of time but also because the Stoics themselves used both the term and the conception of time. They were obviously reluctant to consider time as a purely intellectual construction, as they thought Platonic Ideas to be. Time is real in a sense; therefore, as it is obviously not corporeal, it was attributed the quasi-reality of one of the incorporeals.<sup>140</sup>

When Origen affirms that time is real, that it is a "being" and he establishes the view that it is "creature", he expresses a personal view on a very difficult and highly controversial matter; the philosophers who raised the questions surrounding this matter have never provided fully satisfactory and generally accepted views; and it is certainly not accidental that although questions related to space have enjoyed general agreement for long periods of time, questions of time have always been matters of controversy.

In Stoic philosophy a theory attributed to Chrysippus was that only something "fully real" should be considered as "existing" (υπόρχειν). They used to make a distinction between "υπόρχειν" and "υφεστάναι";<sup>141</sup> the latter is not a full reality but a "potential" reality. What they mean by that is that "fully real" is a predicate when the predicated action is actually taking place; for example, "walking" fully exists for as long as one walks, yet it does not fully exist when one is lying or sitting.<sup>142</sup> In the light of this view the Stoics assert that it is only present time that is fully real. On the other hand, they regard it as a property of time to be both infinite in both directions (namely, that of the past and the future) and to be infinitely divisible. It is their fundamental view of time as a continuum that makes them infer that time is infinitely divisible.<sup>143</sup>

Plutarchus alleges that to Stoics, "present" is considered as time so infinitely small that it is actually "crushed" between past and future (which, as we stated, are regarded as not fully real). Finally, the present itself is regarded to be extinguished because of this "crushing", and not to exist itself in reality; for what remains out of this "crush" is past and future, which nevertheless are considered not as "full" but as "potential" realities.<sup>144</sup> It is according to this argumentation that Plutarchus attributes to the Stoics the opinion that time is not in itself a "being".<sup>145</sup>

Such were the matters surrounding the question of time. Platonists, for example, were asserting that it is time's "continuity" itself that attributes an unreality to time,<sup>146</sup> yet Chrysippus rejects this assertion; for he does not believe that to regard time as a continuum entails an unreality of present time or of the events of the present time and he subsequently develops a whole argumentation on this subject. What the Stoics actually did was make the distinction between what "exists" (as various material objects or an action for as long as it takes place) and what is "real" (and this includes material objects as well as incorporeals like time). Yet, even if we accept that this distinction eluded Proclus in his criticism of Stoic view of time,<sup>147</sup> what remains is the fact that time was a question entailing a number of problems in its treatment.

In spite of the fact that Origen should be regarded as indebted to the Stoics for his fundamental view of time as an "extension", he has taken decisive steps of his own in order to overcome the impasses of Stoic as well as pagan thought in general. What is of substantial help to him towards this direction is the different conception of "world" which he holds.

The notions of "body" and "incorporeal" have a totally different meaning in Origen's thought from that in the Stoics. To them "incorporeal" is a "something" between being and non-being; it is only of necessity that they are compelled to accept the four incorporeals<sup>148</sup> just because neither can they deny that they "exist" nor can they assert that they are bodies.

By stark contrast, in Origen's view, incorporeal nature not only pertains to fully real existence, but also it is this which par excellence *is*. It is God, and only God, who is incorporeal. On the other hand, Origen's reference to corporeality pertains to fallen rational beings, which were created with the fall. What Origen regards as corporeal

nature is originated in moral causes, it has a moral goal and will be terminated after proper free moral action (as we shall discuss in chapter 5). Furthermore, corporeality is applied not only to the visible world, but also to what is "not seen" and yet regarded as material.

Therefore there are two main differences of Origen's thought on the subject, with respect to the Stoics.

First, Origen holds the view that the whole world (according to his conception of "world") is a material one; yet he does not allow that only what is a "body" is a "being" (ὄν), as the Stoics did.<sup>149</sup> As he holds a notion of *transcendence* with respect to the world, he not only affirms that incorporeal is real, but also his conviction is that it is this incorporeal nature which is the fundamental reality -not in the degree, so to speak, of reality, but in the quality of it.

Secondly, the distinction between corporeality and incorporeality interests Origen for reasons purely theological, not natural. The bodies that interest Origen are those which have a theological significance and those are the bodies of rational beings.<sup>150</sup> In the final analysis the conception of corporeality pertains to the world as a "downfall" (καταβολή) and underlines the radical transcendence and superiority of incorporeal divine life compared to the entire world which is corporeal.

Given these presuppositions, Origen had no reason to wonder as to whether time itself is a body. He, as well as the Stoics, knew the simple and apparent phenomenological datum that time is not a body. The difference is that while to Stoics this datum was a source of embarrassment, to Origen it was not. The reason lies in their different conceptions of the world itself, their different opinions about the significance of corporeality and incorporeality, and the notion of *transcendence* (which the Stoics did not actually hold at all) -all of them with respect to the conception of what is *real*.

In Origen's view the fact that time is not a body does not create

any problem at all. Time is not a body in the same sense that "space" itself is not a body, the function of "speaking" (namely, expressions, phrases, affirmations, etc.) is not a body, "void" is not a body,<sup>151</sup> in like a manner that a "predicate" or an "axiom" or the abstract notion of "to be attached" or "to be interwoven with"<sup>152</sup> are not in themselves bodies. Origen was far removed from the Stoic doctrine that "only what is a body is real. Therefore he never faced the dilemmas of the Stoics, who remained imprisoned in these impasses just because they never held a notion of *transcendence* to the world; they preferred to remain into the visible material world and its impasses. This is what Origen calls as "the absurdities of the followers of Zeno and Chryssippus" declaring that he does not hold views which would lead him to "fall into these absurdities".<sup>153</sup>

To the Stoics this world is "the whole". Origen, too, names the world by the same expression. Yet he regards this "whole" not as an absolute and all-embracing reality but as a reality created, dependent, related to the transcendent God and, in itself, being *out* of God. This is a striking difference between Origen and the Stoics -a difference which had serious implications.

When Origen refers to time as "that which is extended alongside with" (τό συμπαρατείνόμενον) he, by this very term, indicates, a lot of his conception of time and its relation to the "structure of the world", as we have seen. Yet he does not employ any particular noun for time proper to be predicated by the adjective συμπαρατείνόμενον. He does so when he refers to time as that which is "extended alongside with" the "structure" of Paul's "life".<sup>154</sup> Although it is obvious that this "extension" is not a spatial one Origen does not say what would be the most appropriate noun to portray time. He rather insists upon the term διάστημα (extension) and his notion of the close connexion of this διάστημα to the "structure of the world".



Yet, a painstaking study of Origen's thought reveals an additional substantial characteristic of the essence of time proper. In fact, there are points of his work where he appears to consider time as a "dimension" of the world.

It should be noted that in Greek the terms "diastema" (extension) and "diastasis" (dimension) have the same root and their meaning has an inner connexion. "Diastasis" (dimension) is definitely a "diastema" (extension) along which life is going on. We today regard time as the fourth dimension of the space-time, which stands in close connexion to the three spatial dimensions. Accordingly, the term "adiastatos" indicates what is without "diastases" (dimensions), that is to say, "dimensionless". It is exactly this term which is used by Origen in two cases at least.

Origen's conviction is that it is divine life which is the very life and it is this state, namely the divine one, which Origen calls as "perpetual life" (αἰζωΐας).<sup>155</sup> It is obvious that Origen here refers to the life of God. It is the very same term "perpetual life" that Origen uses at another point of the same work, *expProo*, again in order to indicate the divine life as the final goal of all creation; and it is there that he describes this life, as "calm and dimensionless" (αταράχου καὶ αδιαστάτου ζωῆς).<sup>156</sup> So the contrast between the atemporal divine life and the temporal world is pointed up through the term "adiastatos".

This is a point in Origen's thought which deserves to be particularly noticed and studied. Our previous analyses have shown that the radical transcendence of God to the world is portrayed in terms of space and time. The life of creation is contrasted by divine life by the fact that God's life transcends all space and all time, namely that divine life is spaceless and timeless. When therefore Origen depicts divine life as a "life without dimensions" it is obvious that he means space and time, alluding to the absence of space and time in the divine life.

Thus Origen considers time as a dimension. This is how the terms "diastema" (extension) and "diastasis" (dimension) are related, not only because they are closely related to each other on the grounds of philology, but also because it is Origen himself who correlates them, in order to express a substantial facet of his conception of time.

It is worth while reflecting upon this view of time as dimension, in order to enquire what is the inner meaning he attributes to this notion.

It should be noted from the beginning that the term "diastasis" (dimension), applied to time, is not an invention of Origen's, just as the term "diastema" (extension) also is not; while the latter is of Stoic origin, as we have already discussed, the former is a term employed by the Neoplatonists in order to refer to time. The very term "adiastatos" can many times be found in Plotinus, in the *Enneads*, III,7-13, namely in the chapter where he deals with the question of time and eternity.<sup>157</sup> So it is obvious that, in treating the question of time, Neoplatonists were using the term "adiastatos". The term "diastasis" (dimension) was used, too,<sup>158</sup> as Plotinus regards time as a "dimension of life" (διάστασις ζωής)<sup>159</sup> and that "eternity" (αἰών) is "dimensionless" (αδιάστατον) and "non temporal" (οὐ χρονικόν).<sup>160</sup>

This by no means suggests that Origen's view of time has been influenced by that of Plotinus.

First of all, Origen was twenty years older than Plotinus and he wrote his commentaries of the Proverbs (where the notion of dimension is found) probably around 238 A.D.<sup>161</sup> Taking into account that the *Enneads* were composed when Plotinus was in an old age, it follows that, when Origen made these affirmations, the *Enneads* were not written yet.

Beyond that, however, to Neoplatonism time is the motion of the soul and the fundamental Platonic notion of time as an "image" of

eternity is preserved there, too.

In the light of our analyses hitherto, it should be stressed that Origen's view of time is in essence fundamentally different from the Platonic one as regards this crucial point: To Plato, time is a "moving image of eternity" and this very term of *image* denotes that time was established in the world by the Demiurge so that a certain *affinity* exists between the world and the world of Ideas. Time, as an "image", is exactly that element by which an affinity is established between Here and Beyond.

By sharp contrast, Origen's view is exactly the contrary: It is exactly in terms of space and time that the radical "schism", the "gap", between the radically transcendent God and the world is portrayed. Time not only *does not* establish any "affinity" between divine life and the world, but it is exactly *in terms of time* that the radical "hiatus" between God and the world is portrayed.

Therefore Origen is quite far away from Platonism and Neoplatonism. Besides, in Plotinus' view, time was not created as a being out of non-being, but it followed down a "restlessly active nature" which was in "that quiet life"<sup>162</sup> and so this "nature" "moved and time moved with it";<sup>163</sup> so time was existing "before" time and "was at rest with the eternity in real being"<sup>164</sup> and "although it was not yet time" "it kept quiet too";<sup>165</sup> in his view, too, time was made "according to the pattern of eternity, and as its moving image".<sup>166</sup> In short, whereas to Plotinus time is *life* (of the soul),<sup>167</sup> to Origen is but a *natural element*, namely an element of the make up of the world. The difference between Plotinus' and Origen's views of time is far too striking to need any further comment.<sup>168</sup>

Yet Origen has no hesitation in employing the term "adiastatos" as well as the notion implied by it, namely of time as a "dimension of life".

The intellectual distinction between time and the "construction of

this world" or the "structure of life", as we have pointed out, implies the conceptual distinction between space and time. It is Origen's view that rational nature is "changeable and convertible by the very condition of its being created -for what was not and began to be is by this very fact shown to be of a changeable nature";<sup>169</sup> and he repeats that "rational nature is changeable and convertible"<sup>170</sup> and it was "necessary for God to make a bodily nature, capable of changing at the Creator's will, by an alteration of qualities, into everything that circumstances might require".<sup>171</sup> It is through the establishment of time as a creature and part of the make-up of the world that "change" and "alteration" make sense. What Origen calls "structure" of the world provides the "scenery" (intellectually and abstractly conceived, of course) for the drama of the world to take *place*; the "structure", therefore, provides the "place"; it is through *time* that "action" and "movement" (and thus, change and alteration) can make sense and be realized. Time therefore is a "dimension of life" for freedom of rational creatures to make sense and to be realized; for it is obvious that freedom of rational creatures can make no sense in absence of time. Time, therefore, as a διάστημα (extension) is the διάστασις (dimension) alongside which world moves towards the end.<sup>172</sup> This is why Origen says "...and through time the whole returns to itself."<sup>173</sup> He does not mention space at that point; for it is time itself which constitutes the "dimension" for the "return", namely for "motion" itself. This is the sense, namely dimension for motion to be realized, in which time is conceived as an "extension" of motion.

Origen's view of "adiastatos" (dimensionless) applied to divine life indicates his conception of divine life as totally beyond time, as God himself is beyond any notion of change or alteration; and certainly it is not accidental that Origen uses the term "dimensionless" together with the term "calm" when he refers to the state of divine reality.<sup>174</sup>

What is in divine life is unchanged as it is perfect; this is why Origen, at another point uses the term "adiastatos" in order to indicate what is certain, positive and not subject to change.<sup>175</sup> R. Sorabji<sup>176</sup> expounds the views of Gregory of Nyssa on this question as a "fuller"<sup>177</sup> account of the divine reality. What he states there,<sup>178</sup> however, are but Origen's views employed by Gregory.<sup>179</sup> The very definition of time as *διάστημα*, its relation to the world portrayed by the term *συνπαρεκτεινόμενον*, the portrayal of divine life by the term *αδιάστατος*, and, in general, the conception of both time and divine timelessness, are all just a repetition of Origen's own ideas and expressions.<sup>180</sup>

Therefore that is not the case of a "fuller" account; it is one in which the Cappadocians *repeat* the view of time and divine reality as established by their master, Origen.

R. Sorabji<sup>181</sup> also asserts that Philoponus "picks up the very words" which "Proclus and earlier Plotinus, Basil and Gregory" used in their discussions on time and divine reality. Proclus certainly follows Plotinus. How radically different Origen's views were will be discussed again further on. As far as the Cappadocians are concerned, it is not their "very words", as R. Sorabji asserts, but Origen's ones that Philoponus actually "picks up".

Our conclusion, therefore, is that Origen forms his own view of time according to his fundamental Christian convictions; in doing so he has no hesitation of employing the terminology of pagan philosophical schools, being selective to the extent that the exposition of his own conception of time is served.

Origen considers time as a "dimension" of the world and introduces the term "co-extended alongside with" (*συνπαρεκτεινόμενος*) in order to portray the very relation of this "dimension" to what, by abstraction, he calls "structure of this world" (alluding to space only, as a constitutive element of the world). In doing so, he actually seems to

have an inner conception of what only in the twentieth century was conceived as "space-time". We cannot know to what extent Origen was conscious and had a clear conception of this reality; yet even if he had such a conception he would have never expounded that in a separate treatise; for he stresses that his purpose is to enunciate theological views, not views on matters of nature (*φυσιολογεῖν*).<sup>182</sup> Had he nevertheless or had he not a clear conscious conception of the reality of "space-time", we may say that he had an intuition of that.<sup>183</sup>

Consequently, in Origen's view it would be "absurd"<sup>184</sup> to wonder whether or not time is a body, in the same sense that he would consider as absurd to wonder whether or not "length" or "height" or "width" are bodies in themselves. It is the fundamental presuppositions of his thought that prevent Origen from such "absurd" questions; and it is these presuppositions which allow Origen to affirm explicitly that time is a creature of full reality, keeping away from the perplexities that Stoic thought entails.

Nevertheless a clarification should be made. When Origen affirms that time is a "being" and a "creature" he certainly means the temporal nature of the world; in other words he means time as an element of the make-up of creation, due to which "course" and "motion" make sense. However, as regards the "length" of time, this has been "made" only until the present, no matter how this present is conceived from the various points of view;<sup>185</sup> time is an "extension" for the movement to take place alongside this "dimension" of life; yet this extension is not a completed creature until its end. What was created was the temporality, the faculty of the world to function in this certain way; the extension nevertheless has been actually realized until the present; "future" is not a pre-made extension alongside which the world will move; future is an expected, not a pre-made, reality. However, it is the very fact that temporality was created and time is a continuum that guarantees the

flux of space-time towards the future. This is why Origen considers time as "co-extended alongside with" the "structure" of this world; what is "in front", as a future, is to be realized, but not realized yet.

The conclusion at this point is that time, as a creature, is the temporal nature of the world; it is not a pre-fabricated "extension" available to the world "in front" of it.

It is quite characteristic that Origen refers to the future time (that is to the time which is to come, but not yet realized) using the term *ναπεκτείνεται*, which means "extended alongside", but he does not use the preposition "σύν-" (with) (as he does with the term *συναπεκτείνων*).<sup>186</sup> This is the way in which he makes the distinction between the time which has already been realized and the time which is still to be realized. In the first case (that is, in the case of past and present), time is a creature "made"; in the second case (that is, in the case of future) time is a creature "planned beforehand" (or, "provided"). Thus, at another point, he accordingly notes that "God as creator is in all creatures; ... somewhere (he is present) in potentiality (*δυνάμει*) and somewhere (he is present) in actuality (*ἐνερχειά*)".<sup>187</sup> What therefore Origen considers as a created "dimension" is *temporality* as a fundamental property of the make up of the world.

Moreover he holds the psychological and phenomenological division of time into past, present and future. Thus, in *se/Ez*, he refers to Ezek.,16,30 "and you have three times committed fornication" and comments as follows: "for the three times (*οἱ τρεῖς χρόνοι*) comprise the whole aeon".<sup>188</sup> In *expProv*, he again refers to "the former and the present and the future things".<sup>189</sup> Yet it is in the *commJohn* (at the point where he refers to the actual meaning of the tenses) that he enunciates his views about "existence" in relation to the parts of time, namely to past, present and future. It is there that Origen enunciates that the future refers to what "will exist" (*τό μέλλον υπάρξει*).<sup>190</sup> It is

also quite characteristic of his views on the subject that he refers to the "kingdom of God" as a "contemplation" of the past aeons as "aeons made" (γενομένων αἰώνων) while the future aeons are stated as "aeons which will be made" (γενησομένων αἰώνων).<sup>191</sup> The meaning of this "contemplation" has a different character in relation either to the past or to the future; referred to the past (which is already "made" this contemplation means a "memory" (μνήμην) of the past aeons;<sup>192</sup> in the case of the future aeons this should be understood as a kind of foreknowledge. Thus Origen conceives time not only in terms of an objective reality related to the world but he holds also a psychological conception of it.

In the light of our discussion in this section, we can now come to a point which up to now seems to be puzzling. We can now establish the view that it was Origen who was actually the source of Augustine's theory of time. J. Callahan has written a work<sup>193</sup> in which he argues that it was Basil of Caesarea who decisively influenced Augustine in forming his theory of time.

He is wrong for the simple reason that what constitutes Basil's affirmations about the nature of time are Origen's definitions of time *verbatim*. Perhaps things would have been clearer if the Cappadocians (and we refer to Basil and Gregory of Nyssa) were straight enough as to state that their affirmations could not claim actual originality but they were mere repetitions of Origen's perceptions.

John Callahan wrote his work in 1958. As late as 1983, R. Sorabji<sup>194</sup> refers to Callahan's assertions and although he has some doubts referring to the alleged influence of Gregory of Nyssa upon Augustine he cannot himself solve the mystery. He suggests Aristotelians as a possible source of influence upon Augustine<sup>195</sup> but he himself says<sup>196</sup> that he is deterred from drawing conclusions due to Augustine's slowness in acquiring Greek, the language in which Gregory



wrote.

In arguing that Basil is the source of Augustine's theory of time, Callahan, too, speaks of a "puzzle"<sup>197</sup> because there is no evidence that Basil's refutation of Eunomius (the work in which Basil's views of time are found and adduced as an evidence by Callahan) was ever translated into Latin, in whole or in part; and he, too, refers to the current opinions about Augustine's knowledge of Greek (especially at the relatively early age when he wrote the *Confessions*); according to these opinions, Augustine would not have been able to read Basil's Greek with the facility that the adaption of Basil's ideas this chapter of the *Confessions* would seem to require.<sup>198</sup> Finally he says that he cannot attempt any solution to this question<sup>199</sup> and all he says at the end of his work is that Basil influenced Augustine "through some contact that cannot at present be determined".<sup>200</sup>

We think it is high time that a definite and substantiated answer should be provided to what for too long has been regarded as a difficult question and "mystery". This answer can be provided out of our discussion hitherto.

There is no need to search for "connexions" between Basil and Augustine (as J. Callahan does), because, in fact, *Augustine never read Basil's work*. For it was not Basil (neither himself nor through any "connexion") but Origen who influenced Augustine's theory of time.<sup>201</sup> How Augustine came in contact with Origen's writings could not be a mystery. At the time of Augustine, Origen's works had been translated into Latin. For it was during Augustine's lifetime (354-430) and indeed during his maturity that Jerome translated a large part of Origen's "Homilies on the Song of Songs" (380) and Rufinus translated the "Commentary on the Song of Songs" (400), the *De Principiis* and other works of Origen. Besides, in relation to other matters, Augustine himself refers to Origen by name.<sup>202</sup>

The text of Basil which Callahan alleges to have influenced Augustine is in *Adversus Eunomium*, 1,21. Basil states that time is not the movement of heavenly bodies itself (as Eunomius alleged) but it is "the extension which is extended alongside with the constitution of the world, in which all movement is measured ... and thus we say that it is quicker or slower".<sup>203</sup> As the reader can see (through mere juxtaposition with Origen's passages already quoted in the previous pages), in Basil's statement there is not a term or expression pertaining to the definition of time which has not been used by Origen. Basil here does nothing more than merely to *reproduce* Origen's conception of time. That he did not that what he says here are but views of his great master is a historic and serious omission. Indeed Basil is accountable for this failure and he owes an apology to the judgement of History.

At the same point of this work, Basil affirms that the movement of stars does not indicate "what" time is by "how much" time is (οὐ γὰρ ποιάν, ἀλλ' εἶπερ ἄρα, ποσὴν μάλλον ἢν εἰπεῖν οικειότερον. ἀλλὰ τίς οὕτω παῖς παντελῶς τὴν διάνοιαν ὥστε αἰνοεῖν ὅτι ἡμέραι μὲν καὶ ὥραι καὶ μῆνες καὶ ενιαυτοὶ μέτρα τοῦ χρόνου εἰσὶν, οὐχὶ μέρη;).<sup>204</sup>

In a column beside this section of *Adversus Eunomium* (which, of course we have not quoted) Callahan cites a passage from Augustine's *Confessions* (X,23ff). Then he goes on to compare the passages and to ground the view that it is due to the definition of time as an "extension" (διάστημα) and "extended alongside with" (συμπαρεκτείνων) that Augustine has been able to articulate the view that time is something distinct from the movement of heavenly bodies.<sup>205</sup> But, in view of our discussion in this chapter, Augustine did not have to think much on this or to make any inferences. Origen had already portrayed this notion very clearly.

In vain Callahan tries to relate the term "day" as found both in Basil's and Augustine's compared passages, asserting that the latter

refers to "day" because the former does so.<sup>206</sup> We repeat that Augustine never read the passage of Basil which Callahan adduces here. The connexion of "day" to the definition of time as "extension" (διάστημα) and "extended along side with" (συμπαρεκτείνον) was made by Origen.<sup>207</sup> It is also Origen who explicitly states that the term "day" does not mean "the course of the sun" (τόν δρόμον τόν ηλιακόν).<sup>208</sup>

Furthermore, Callahan asserts that it is also due to the same temporal categories that Augustine was able to depict time as a "dimension".<sup>209</sup> No doubt that, at this point, Callahan is right. What he does not know though is that, here too, Augustine did not have to make much speculation or original conceptual perception. For it was Origen who had perceived time as a "dimension" due to the very fundamental perception of time as a *διάστημα* and *συμπαρεκτείνον* which he himself had established and elaborated as a Christian view of time.

So, when Augustine speaks of time as a *distentio* he has not actually made any discovery of his own. He just employs the views perceived, elaborated and presented by Origen. For it was he who first saw that to regard time as a "dimension" is an immediate consequence of the very affirmation of time as an "extension" which is something different than space and yet "extended alongside with" space. The perception, the logical inference and the use of the term "dimension", all had been made by Origen, not to mention the notion of the relation of time to motion (which Augustine also employed) which also Origen first introduced in articulating a Christian view of time. As for the expression *in tempore* employed by Augustine<sup>210</sup> we have already seen that, at this point, too, Origen had preceded him.

We endorse Callahan's argument that when Augustine introduces the term *distentio* speaking of time, what he has in mind is the expression *συμπαρεκτεινόμενον τῇ συστάσει τοῦ κόσμου*.<sup>211</sup> But we do not endorse his claim that this particular point, too, constitutes an

influence of Basil's upon Augustine. Callahan is certainly right in asserting that Augustine became able to take this view of time due to this formulation. Yet, as we said, this view itself, too, had been already taken by Origen himself. In any case, Augustine's expression *spatium temporis*<sup>212</sup> is but a literal translation of Origen's expression *χρονικόν διάστημα* so often used by him, as we already discussed in this chapter.

Due to Origen's definitions of time Augustine did not stick to an altogether psychological conception of time but expounded his conception of it in a way in which the psychological aspect of time increasingly fades giving room to a more objective definition of it. This is why Augustine's view of time is less psychological at the end of his philosophizing about it in the *Confessions* than it was in the beginning.

So when Augustine comes to regard the three functions of the mind,<sup>213</sup> no longer regarded as distinguished activities but rather as three aspects of a single *distentio*, he just comes in line with Origen's view of time.

It is because Origen had considered time as something different than Plotinus' time as *διάστασις ζωῆς* (dimension of life) that Augustine's *distentio* is rightly regarded as something different than the Plotinian perception of time. Callahan is right in regarding this view of time as a "radical transformation".<sup>214</sup> For indeed this *διάστασις* (dimension) has nothing to do with the mental phenomena of memory, attention and anticipation.

Origen, as we saw, also held a psychological perception of time, namely time perceived as comprising past, present and future.<sup>215</sup> It was this aspect that influenced Gregory of Nyssa more.<sup>216</sup> But this view of time was secondary in Origen's whole conception of it. He certainly speaks of "memory" (μνήμην) of past time<sup>217</sup> and of "contemplation" (θεωρία) of future or past time<sup>218</sup> as well as of "knowledge" (γνώσιν) of things "past, present and future"<sup>219</sup> but they are always references to

psychological states *accompanying* motion in time rather than defining and indicating time in itself.

Indeed this is what constitutes a fundamental difference between Origen's conception of time and that of Plotinus. To Plotinus, time is *in* the soul; but he thinks of a "soul" which is a universal principle that creates the world and everything in it [s. Introduction]. In such a view, time is simply the productive *life* of this soul, in which the universe and its motion have their existence. As time is regarded as the power which produces motion (and does not measure it), everything is said to be *in* time. Thus time is stated as a *διάστασις ζωῆς* (dimension of life) only insofar as it produces motion.

To Origen, however, the distinction of time in itself from space, established by the term *συμπαρεκτείνων* (extended alongside with), renders time as a *dimension* existing in itself besides space and therefore the term *διάστασις* in this conception of time has a radically different meaning than that in Plotinus.

With respect to this, and without any basis at all, P. Plass makes the wrong assertion that, in Origen, time is "the unsure, fragile motion of minds".<sup>220</sup> This is one more proof that this scholar has approached Origen's thought already determined to read Neoplatonic thought in it. But this particular assertion is also ironical; for the conception of time in Origen was *exactly the opposite* to what here Plass alleges. In fact, Basil used this conception of time in his attack to Eunomius, who asserted that "time" is in itself "motion"; what Plass does here is to attribute to Origen a conception of time which is absolutely contrary to that which he really held.<sup>221</sup>

Regardless of the fact that Callahan is wrong in thinking that it was in Basil that Augustine found the sources for his theory of time, he is right in asserting that, without the definition of time as an extension extended alongside with the constitution of the world, Augustine's

affirmation of time as the *distentio animi* would be regarded as simply a transformation of Plotinus' *διδασκαίς ζωής*. But the "radical transformation" of the Plotinian conception of *διδασκαίς* into a quite different conceptual category was undoubtedly an achievement of Origen, as our analyses in this section comparing Origen's view of time to that of either Plato's or Plotinus' have shown.

There is a point though which Callahan would not suspect at all. It is true that Origen's (according to Callahan: Basil's) perception of time enabled Augustine to relate time to *any* motion. But is it accidental that such a perception of time leads to this radical result? The answer is no. For when Origen established and elaborated his own conception of time he held a conception of the world consisted of many ranks of life. Time was perceived as existing in *all* ranks of life and *motion* in them exists too.<sup>222</sup> Thus he devised a conception of time which can be related not just to the movement of the heavenly bodies of the visible firmament, or even only to the movement of what is visible. He established a conception of time which is related even to movement of worlds which are "not seen" and yet they are "material". This is why Origen established a view of time which is related to *any motion* and not just to the movement of the visible heavenly bodies or of the movement of anything visible. We shall discuss this conception of Origen in §3 in this chapter.

Augustine did not go further than Origen on the perception of time as a *dimension* simply because Origen did not (for his own reasons, namely that an *ad hoc* treatise on time was not in his plans). Thus, it is because Origen leaves the question unelaborated and speaks by contrast rather, namely of timelessness as "dimensionless", that Augustine himself states: "Thus it seems to me that time is nothing other than an extension (*distentio*), but what it is an extension of I do not know. It would be surprising if it were not an extension of the soul (*animus*)

itself."<sup>223</sup> If Origen had explicated his view of time as a dimension<sup>224</sup> then Augustine would "know" what kind of "dimension" time is. Thus he seems to seek refuge rather in Plotinus' conception of the nature of this "dimension" and subsequently it has been argued that his conception of time was influenced by that of Plotinus.<sup>225</sup>

This is one more tragic irony, similar to the case with Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus discussed in this chapter. For, again, although it was Origen who made the radical transformations in the conception of time and it was him who decisively established a view of time entirely different from any Platonic or Neoplatonic one -he is now regarded outside "orthodoxy". Augustine however remained within certain perceptions of Plotinus and further, he has been proven unable even just to follow Origen to the limits of his inspired establishment of a Christian view of time.

In fact Augustine was not able to follow Origen's perceptions all the way -probably because he did not come in contact with a translation of the entirety of Origen's works. He certainly had a false knowledge of crucial facets of Origen's theology, as his attack against Origen by name show.<sup>226</sup> Thus Augustine did not comprehend Origen's brilliantly clear notion that time is *one* and it is an extension of the *entirety* of the world, namely that all rational creatures live in *this* time. Hence, he introduces a notion of "angelic time"<sup>227</sup> which he depends on the mental movements of the angels.<sup>228</sup>

On this notion Augustine is rather vague, as he cannot say either that these movements are time nor that they are not. Finally he seems to plump for the view that they are *time*, yet of a kind of its own; it is a sort of quasi-time -a notion employed in order to put the angels between time and the divine reality. In any case, one can hardly help thinking that the relation of this "time" to movements of souls of angels is, in essence, quite reminiscent of Plotinus' views on the question As our

discussion has shown, none of this vagueness appears in the views of Origen. We think that this is due to the fact that Augustine was not fully aware of the radical transformations which the Neoplatonic view of time underwent through Origen. We assume that this is a reason for which (in contrast to what happens in Origen) the "psychological" aspect of time prevails over the "objectivist" one in Augustine's thought. Plotinus' general idea was that time is somehow dependent on changes in the soul. Augustine has never been able to overcome radically the Neoplatonic principle of close connexion of the *essence* of time to soul—even though he regards the notion of "soul" in an apparently different context.

In any case, the notion of time as comprising three parts is certainly found in the Greek thought, too and it is explicitly stated as such by the Stoics; yet as the Stoics relate past and future with a conception of infinity,<sup>229</sup> it would be interesting to enquire how Origen conceives the relation of time to the infinite.

**The relation of time to the Infinite.** The concept of infinite plays a particular part in Origen's thought; yet it is a point on which some misunderstandings of his thought have taken place. It has been correctly asserted that, for Origen, what is infinite is incomprehensible. What has not been clearly said, however, is that it is creation that Origen has in mind when he relates the notions of "infinite" and "incomprehensible". In the *Princ* there is a passage which reads as follows:

"We must suppose, therefore, that in the beginning God made a number of rational and intelligent beings, or whatever the before-mentioned minds ought to be called, as he foresaw would be sufficient. It is certain that he made them according to some definite number fore-ordained by himself; for we must not suppose, as some would, that there is no end of created beings, since where there is no end there can neither be any comprehension nor limitation. If there had



been no end, then certainly created beings could neither have been controlled nor provided by God. For by its nature whatever is infinite will also be beyond comprehension."<sup>230</sup>

There is also a passage preserved in Greek and named by Koetschau as Fragment 24; but, although incorporated in the *Princ*, it is not an Origen's writing but a passage from Justinian's *libOr*.<sup>231</sup> This text reads thus: "For we must maintain that even the power of God is finite, and we must not, under pretext of praising him, lose sight of his limitations. For if the divine power were infinite, of necessity it could not even understand itself, since the infinite is by its nature incomprehensible".<sup>232</sup>

It is from the same text of Justinian<sup>233</sup> where the following opinion is attributed to Origen: "Let no one take offence at the saying, if we put limits even to the power of God. For to encompass things that are infinite is by nature an impossibility".<sup>234</sup>

Those texts (incorporated in Koetschau's edition of *Princ*, although not Origen's writings) constitute one more misleading interpretation of Origen's authentic views. For if they were true, it would entail that God himself should not be regarded as "infinite" because in such a case he would be unable to comprehend himself. Thus, the notion of "infinite" could not be applied to God in any way at all.

But this is not the case in Origen's thought. For he *does* apply the notion of infinite to God himself. He states that "finite knowledge" applies only to what has been created; the "knowledge" of Holy Trinity though is "without any limit" (ἀνέπαντος).<sup>235</sup> The allegation of Justinian (that the notion of "infinite" virtually cannot be applied to God because in such a case God would not comprehend himself) is then a distortion of Origen's authentic views. For Origen himself states that God himself is "infinite" (τὸ ἀείπῳ)<sup>236</sup> and elsewhere he says that God is "from infinite to infinite" (ἐξ ἀείπῳ ἐν ἀείπῳ),<sup>237</sup> he also uses an expression which

incontestably applies the notion of infinite to God, as he states that "to the greatness of God" (ἡ μεγαλωσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ) "there is no limit" (καὶ οὐκ ἔστι πέρας τῆς μεγαλωσύνης αὐτοῦ) and his providence (πρόνοια) of creatures is said as being "from the infinite to the infinite and even beyond" (ἐξ ἀπείρου ἐπ' ἀπείρον καὶ ἐντεύθεν).<sup>238</sup> Hence it is in accordance with his view when Origen states that God is "omnipotent" (παντοδύναμος)<sup>239</sup> and speaks of his "ineffable power" (ἀφάτῳ δυνάμει).<sup>240</sup>

The very use of the notion of "infinite" itself constitutes an outstanding point of contrast between the Greek and the Christian thought. Whereas the Greeks are very shy in attributing infinity to God, the Christians (on this following Philo) speak of God as infinite without any hesitation at all. Indeed in the Christian Fathers there is a close connexion between the infinity and the incomprehensibility of God.<sup>241</sup> Our discussion here shows that Origen himself has no hesitation whatever in order to attribute the notion of infinity to God in the most explicit terms, in this way establishing what today is regarded as a major conceptual (as well as linguistic) contrast of the Christians with respect to the Greeks.

In Origen's thought, nevertheless, what is infinite is related to what is incomprehensible; but this notion is applied only dialectically in respect of the creation and duration of the world; a relevant passage in the *Princ* reads as follows:

"Moreover, anyone who looks for them at his leisure can find in the divine scriptures very many sayings of this sort, which assert that the world both had a beginning and is expecting an end. If, however, there is anyone who in this matter would oppose either the authority or the credibility of our scripture, let us ask him the question, whether he asserts that God can comprehend all things or that he cannot? Now to say that he cannot is clearly impious. If, however, he should say, as he must, that God comprehends all things, it follows, from this very fact

that they can be comprehended, that they are understood to have both a beginning and an end. For that which is absolutely without any beginning can in no way be comprehended. However far the understanding may extend, so far is the ability to comprehend withdrawn and removed endlessly, when there is held to be no beginning."<sup>242</sup>

Hence the argument of the connexion between "infinite" and "incomprehensible" is adduced by Origen in order to ground his fundamental view discussed in chapter 1, namely that the world is not beginningless; that is, in order to ground a view which is exactly the opposite of what Justinian and others have attributed to Origen. Indeed the connexion between what is "finite" and what is "comprehensible" is a Stoic argument.

R. Sorabji<sup>243</sup> seems to be in doubt on whether this is true or not, as he says that he does not himself find such an argument in the Stoic literature. It is a good opportunity here to clear this doubt by saying that this argument is articulated by Cleomedes in arguing that the world is finite ("δὴλον ἐκ τοῦ ὑπὸ φύσεως αὐτὸν διοικεῖσθαι ... δεῖ γὰρ κατακρατεῖν τὴν φύσιν οὐτινος ἐστίν. ... ὥστε φύσιν ἔχων τὴν διοικούσαν, αὐτὸς μὲν πεπέρασται ἀναγκάως).<sup>244</sup>

Sorabji adduces the citation which R.T. Wallis made in order to prove the Stoic idea that only a finite number of states is *knowable*.<sup>245</sup> But this passage proves nothing of the sort; so Sorabji is rather justified in doubting as to whether or not the Stoics actually held such an idea. It seems that an old suggestion about this Stoic view was made by earlier scholars but the actual grounding of this Stoic view was lost. It seems also that R.T. Wallis was aware of the suggestion about this Stoic view, but he did not know the source of it. At any rate he adduces a passage which does not prove the point; for all it says that the gods can know the infinitely recurring events by knowing the events of one cycle. This is why an ambiguity surrounds this question and subsequently

R. Sorabji has doubts about it. We hope that the passage which we cited at this point will eliminate this ambiguity as it clearly proves that in fact the Stoics held the idea that only a finite number of states is *knowable*.

The Stoics were bound to connect the notions of "finite" and "comprehensible" because on the one hand they held that the world is "administered by a nature" and yet this nature (namely, their god) is immanent in the world. As there were Stoic affirmations identifying their god with the world, the notion of infinite was puzzling them in any case.

This was not a problem to Origen due to the fact that he held the notion of God's radical transcendence to the world. Thus he could affirm that God himself was "infinite" whereas the world was "finite". Yet is was finite *not because God cannot understand what is infinite*, but because the world came into being for a certain purpose, according to the divine dispensation and it is destined to reach an "end", both in the sense of "goal" and "termination", as we shall later argue.

The argument for the world to be finite lies in the perception of the *world itself* (namely, on the ground that the world has a purpose to attain to) and not in the perception of *God* whatever. Thus, Origen's argument for the world to be finite is not based on its "comprehensibility" by God but on the fact that the world had a beginning and is *directed* towards an end.

Hence R. Sorabji is not right in asserting that, although he does not find the argument in the Stoic literature, this argument becomes explicit in Origen.<sup>246</sup>

Origen as well as the Stoics affirm that the world is finite; yet they take this view departing from different premises and aiming to different purposes. In the Stoic thought, divine comprehensibility is mainly manifested as *συμπάθεια* whereas in Origen divine

comprehensibility is mainly perceived as *νόησις*.

The Stoic *συμπάθεια* exists *in* the world and it is also originated *in* the world since there is no notion of "transcendence" in the Stoic thought at all. Thus the *συμπάθεια* *has to be finite* just because the world is finite, too.

By contrast, Origen's view is that *νόησις* although manifested *in* the world, is originated *beyond* the world, namely in the divine being. So there is no reason compelling him to accept that the world is finite *because* the *νόησις* is finite. On the contrary, because *νόησις* *is not held to be finite*, Origen nowhere postulates that divine comprehensibility is finite. On the contrary. He explicitly and in very strong terms stresses that the divine *νόησις*, namely the divine comprehensibility, is *infinite*.

So there is no logical connexion between the affirmation that the world is finite and the divine ability to comprehend whatever. If Origen affirms that the world is finite he does so for reasons completely different than the Stoics did, namely it is because the course of the world in time is not just a purposeless natural movement but there is a final goal to be achieved that makes Origen to stress that the world is finite.

Therefore it is not the Stoic argument, namely the divine ability to "comprehend" the world, which determines Origen's affirmation that the world is finite. For the divine comprehensibility in itself is explicitly stated as "infinite" and even more than that.

This is why R. Sorabji's assertion, namely that Origen's attitude on the infinity of the world is based upon the arguments of the Stoics, is wrong. The Stoics postulate the world as *finite* because they are preoccupied with preserving the notion of divine comprehensibility. Origen takes for granted that divine comprehensibility is *infinite* yet he affirms that the world is *finite because there is an eschatological*

*purpose* which is to be fulfilled in the course of time. Therefore, and in the light of Origen's statements preserved in Greek, the point of the Latin rendering of the *Princ* where there appears to be a resemblance to the Stoic argument should be regarded as a simplistic rendering due to Rufinus' failure to grasp the intense eschatological character of Origen's thought.<sup>247</sup> Accordingly, it now becomes obvious how misleading the Fragments which Koetschau incorporated in his edition of the *Princ* are.

In the *commMatt* Origen brings the following argument against the notion of beginningless of the world:

"If the world is not consummated, but exists infinitely, then God will not be such as to 'know everything before it was made',<sup>248</sup> but he might be supposed to know only some of them before they were made and, after them, he learned others; for what is infinite is by nature not confined into knowledge, as knowledge itself by nature imposes limits to what is known."<sup>249</sup> It is in this context that the view of Origen's, as expressed in the *Princ*, that God has created everything "by number and measure" can be corroborated from his work in Greek; thus in the *commMatt* he speaks of "the finite number of souls" (ἐκ τοῦ ὁρισμένου τῶν ψυχῶν ἀριθμοῦ).<sup>250</sup>

A painstaking study of Origen's argument at this point of *commMatt* shows that he does not actually question God's comprehensible ability; what he argues for is that there *must* be a *before* creation. For unless such a *before* is allowed *prophecy* makes no sense. God knows the world as finite not actually because God is unable to know what is infinite, but because God is said to know everything *before* it was made. If the world is beginningless divine foreknowledge could make no sense, not because God cannot comprehend what is infinite, but simply because the notion of *before* loses any meaning whatsoever.

Therefore Origen's notion that what is infinite it is

incomprehensible is applied to the world only. He is quite explicit in speaking about the "infinite knowledge" of God, as we have seen. However, the world *must* be finite by virtue of the fact that it was known to God *before* it came into existence. His deeper aim is to argue that the world is a finite creature, namely that it had a beginning and it will have an end. In the final analysis, this view is closely related to his conception of space-time, which is perceived as aiming towards an end and not being the "extension" of an endless and meaningless world movement. This is why he explicitly rejects the notion of an "infinite" (ἀπειράκις) recurrence of worlds.<sup>251</sup>

Thus Origen holds that what is not infinite (that is, what has a beginning and an end) it is comprehensible, too. What follows from this is that *what is comprehensible it is not infinite*; rather it has both a beginning and an end.

This is exactly Origen's conception about time. Regardless of any other statement of Origen about the "duration" of the world, it is his opinion about the causative relation between infinite and incomprehensible that renders his view of time as a finite reality. It is the very view of Origen that it is possible to acquire a "contemplation of both the past and the future aeons"<sup>252</sup> that indicates his conviction that time itself is comprehensible, therefore time is not infinite and so has both a beginning and will come to an end.

Origen uses the participle γεγονότα (those made) to indicate what is a creature, as we have seen.<sup>253</sup> It is therefore clear that when he speaks of γεγονότα (those made) he includes time in them. So when he states that "the contemplation of all made things (γεγονότων) is a finite one; it is only the knowledge of the holy Trinity that is infinite"<sup>254</sup> he actually means that contemplation of time is finite, too.<sup>255</sup>

The very fact that time itself is a creature leads to the conclusion that time is not infinite, but it stretches from a beginning to

an end; this is why time is regarded as comprehensible and the notion of "contemplation" of the whole time is used.

Although Origen's opinion on the finiteness of time can be assumed from the passages where he refers to the "contemplation of made things" (in which time is considered to be included) yet he does not fail to refer particularly to the "contemplation" of all time.

In the *se/ps* it is stated that the term "the kingdom of God" signifies "the contemplation of the aeons made (γεγονότων) and the aeons which will be made (γενησομένων)".<sup>256</sup> In the same work he quotes: "For the kingdom of Lord is the contemplation of all the aeons, both of those made and those which will be made; and it is by this contemplation that enemies become friends."<sup>257</sup> And further: "contemplation of those aeons made and those which will be made is the inheritance of rational nature;".<sup>258</sup>

It can therefore be assumed that, in Origen's view, time is finite, namely it has a beginning and it will have an end. This is why he can speak of "*the order of the entirety of aeons*" (περί τῆς ἐν ἀπασι τοῖς αἰώσι διατάξεως)<sup>259</sup> or "*all the aeons*" (ὅλους τοὺς αἰώνας),<sup>260</sup> as well as of "*the extension of the whole time* (τοῦ διαστήματος τὸν ὅλον χρόνον)".<sup>261</sup>

We would take this notion of Origen from the beginning as a datum stemming from the fact that he regards time proper as closely connected to the world itself. The implied notion (or, feeling) of space-time that Origen appears to hold as he speaks of "time extended alongside with the structure of this world" may directly lead to the conclusion that time and "the structure of this world" (or, space) "begin" together and also come to an end together. Yet Origen does not fail to manifest his view on the question clearly, namely that time is not infinitely long but it had a beginning and it will have an end; this is why he also speaks of "beginning and end and middle of times", as in



Wis.7,17-18.<sup>262</sup>

It is quite remarkable that on the question of non-infinity of time Origen is opposed to a fundamental Stoic doctrine, as the latter held time to be infinite in both directions, namely past and future. On this question Origen's thought is also opposed to O. Cullmann's assertions, namely a work which claims to expound the "pure" Christian conception of time without any "Hellenization" of it.

As a matter of fact, Cullmann holds time to be also infinite in both directions, in this way standing not too far away from the Stoic and Aristotelian conception of it. For he is clear in affirming that time has an infinite extension in both directions, namely past and future.<sup>263</sup> So he holds that time is not a creature,<sup>264</sup> it is also infinite and, therefore, it is an eternal companion of God. This is the way he thinks he has solved the problem of time once and for all, so that "time is no problem any more".<sup>265</sup> It should be also stressed that the time of the "present aeon" is not regarded as something different than this time in which God lives. Simply, at this period of time there is not only God but also the world living in the same time. That the essence of this way of thinking is actually a Platonic one, in which the notion of the "everlasting world" has simply been substituted by the notion of "everlasting time" has already been discussed in an early section in this chapter.

Nevertheless the notion of infinite is involved not only in the conception of what is infinitely long, but also in the conception of infinitely short. It is true that the Greeks failed to master the central concepts of infinitesimal calculus, namely the limit and the process of the convergence towards a limit.<sup>266</sup> The dramatic confrontation of Greek Mathematics with the problems of continuity and the infinite seems in the celebrated paradoxes of Zeno of Elea, in the first half of fifth century B.C. These paradoxes, related by Aristotle,<sup>267</sup> propound, under

the guise of arguments, against the possibility of motion as some of the fundamental conceptions consider space as a continuum of points. It was only the Stoic thought that made some remarkable advances in the logistics of the Infinite and they have anticipated some of the concepts formed in modern Mathematics, beginning with the calculus and leading to the fundamentals of theory of sets.<sup>268</sup>

The Stoics were considering the "now" as the limit between past and future, as we have seen. This notion, if pushed a little, could easily lead to the conclusion that this "now" does not exist at all ("τό δέ νῦν ὁλως μηδέν εἶναι").<sup>269</sup> What is of importance to our subject here is that the Stoics held a notion of time as infinitely divisible. This mainly stemmed from their considering time as a continuum.<sup>270</sup> To Stoics, time is not only infinite in both directions (namely, towards past and future) but they also regard time as admitting of being infinitely divisible, towards a limit which is a "duration" reduced to nil.

Origen does not hold the former of these Stoic notions (namely, of infinite time); yet he appears to hold the latter, that is the divisibility of time *ad infinitum*. As a matter of fact, in his thought it makes sense to speak of an infinitely short time. What is denoted by this is a "duration" of which both "beginning" and "end" virtually coincide. Origen applies this infinitely short duration mainly in order to refer to acts of God manifested into the world.

In the *commMatt* Origen states that the Logos, although acting in time, does not actually need time himself in order to act into the world; thus "if one needs much time in order to offer all his belongings to the poor people, the Logos would not be hindered by time in order to make perfect the man who acts in this way"; therefore "there should be no hesitation in saying that this man becomes perfect all at once (ευθέως)".<sup>271</sup>

Referring to the Judgement, he accordingly states: "And no one

should think that some kind of long time (μακρῶν τιμῶν αἰώνων) will be needed for everybody to render an account about all his life here; for God, by his will, will all at once (αἰφρόως) make everybody recollect everything, good or bad, he committed during his life; and God, by his ineffable power, will make everybody feel what that was he did so that he will understand why he is punished or honoured. And one might dare to say that the kairos of the expected judgement does not need time (ὁ τῆς προσδοκωμένης κρίσεως καιρὸς οὐ δείται χρόνων); but as the resurrection is said to happen 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye'<sup>272</sup> I think the Judgement will happen, too".<sup>273</sup>

In the *commMatt* the same question is discussed. It is there quite clearly stated that no time is needed in order to render an account of all the years we lived in this life (μὴ ὡς χρόνου πολλοῦ δεόμενα, ἵνα συναρθῇ ἡμῖν περὶ τῶν ὅλων χρόνων τῆς ἐνταύθα ζωῆς ῥόχος); and no one should be unfaithful to the power of God to make things happen with such a rapidity (τῷ τάχει τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ ταῦτα δυνάμει); for God did not need time to make this creation; and if it is said that this has been made in six days one should be very careful in understanding what is the meaning of the six days,<sup>274</sup> and Origen repeats that the Judgement will happen in the same way as Paul says the resurrection will happen, appealing to the same I Cor.15,52.<sup>275</sup>

Similarly, in Fragment XXXV from the "Homilies on Jeremiah" he quotes Jer.28,8 saying that the consummation will happen all at once (αἰφρόως).<sup>276</sup>

Therefore, Origen holds that it is possible for an action to take place in time and yet to have no duration; for he asserts that there is a time which is not "enduring time" (χρόνος διαρκής),<sup>277</sup> this means that Origen held a notion of infinitely divisible time, conceiving of a "moment" as a "limit" between past and future; a "limit" without any temporal length, that is to say, an infinitely short time, a time without

duration at all.

Origen is fully conscious of this conception. When he further attempts to depict further the content of the Judgement he speaks of the "beginning" of the Judgement, as he states that it will "begin with those who owe the most debts". Yet he states in parentheses, in the middle of his phrase: "(this beginning) should be understood only as an intellectual conception (εννοία λαμβανομένην); for we have not forgotten what we said before".<sup>278</sup>

Origen knows in such a case makes no actual sense to speak about "beginning", as if it were something distinguished from the rest of the whole duration. For to this "non-enduring-time" categories like "beginning" or "end" or even "duration" apply only just as intellectual conceptions.

Thus the notion of non-enduring time is applied to the creative act of God, to the divine judgement as well as to the resurrection. There also other conceptions to which this notion is applied, too. In Fragment LXXXVIII from his *commJohn* Origen comments on John 12,27 thus:

"...about all these his (sc. Jesus') soul was sad and embarrassed, yet not being dominated by embarrassment, [it was] but momentary (ακαριαίως); this is what is signified by the word "now" (νύν); for as soon as it began it stopped (άμα γάρ τώ άρξασθαι καί επαύσατο) and practically (ώς ένος ειδείν) it was a point of time (σημείον ήν χρόνου). And you should see that he prays for his battle against the powers fighting against him to take place not in duration of time (ούκ έν παρατάσει χρόνου) but in a now (αλλ' έν τώ νύν), which was enough for the soul of Jesus to conquer the power of the evil."<sup>279</sup>

This is how Origen expresses his notion of "non-enduring" time. All the temporal terms used underline the coincidence of "beginning" and "end". He also remains consistent with his conception of time as an "extension" and "continuum" by trying to portray this non-enduring time

as a point of a line.<sup>280</sup> For, in Geometry, a "point" of a line is postulated as having no length and having its beginning and end coincided.<sup>281</sup> Finally, it should be noted that although Origen holds the notion of infinitely short time, he remains consistent with his conception of time as real; he has none of the Stoic reservations which tend to refuse the reality of "now" as they consider it "crushed" to extinction by both past and future. To Origen "now" (νῦν) is a fully real time, as all time is. It is in this real "now" that real temporal events occur; and those events are not only real, but they also are considered to be of tremendous importance for the entire world.

The conclusion on the question is that Origen rejects the view that time is infinite in both its directions. He directly relates the notion of infinite to what is incomprehensible and constantly refuses to apply to his world. However he holds a notion of infinitely short time, a time of no duration at all; in this case he does not directly use the term "infinite"; yet he expresses his notion of an infinite divisibility of time leading to this conceptual limit by terms such as "momentary" (ἀκαταίωτος), "now" (νῦν) or as the opposite of what he calls as "enduring time" (χρόνος διαρκής). Thus, in his conception of time, he rejects the notion of infinite when it implies a time very long, a time without beginning or end; yet he holds the notion of infinite referring to the *ac infinitum* division of the continuum of time, in the case of a very short time, a time of which beginning and end virtually coincide.

**The notion of relativity in the perception of time.** Origen regards the world as being "in" time<sup>282</sup> or "under" time.<sup>283</sup> It is his conception of time as a creature of God, as well as the "broader" content he attributes to the term "world", that allow him to consider the presence of time in the various ranks of life in a more flexible way. Thus he goes as far as to assert a notion of relativity in the perception of time in the various ranks of life.

Origen not only holds the notion of God's radical transcendence with respect to time, he also implies a relativity in the perception of time itself either by God or from the creation's point of view. Thus, in his *homJer*, he enunciates this assertion:

"What is little to man is much to another living being. For instance, what is little to a man is big to a child. So time of a human lifetime, is little compared to the whole of the present aeon which comprises many years. So what is little to God is much to us and the whole aeon is little to God. When therefore it is said; 'Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself for a little moment'<sup>284</sup> this saying about a little moment should be regarded not as referring to the relation to those who are ordered to walk and enter his chambers, but referring to the relation to Him who orders that, to whom is little what to the former is much."<sup>285</sup>

This is a point on which Origen's thought is contrasted to the Stoic one. When they define time as fundamentally being an "extension", they do not introduce any notion of relativity in the conception of it. For to them there is no notion of transcendence. The world is material and their god is material, too, and is immanent in the world. So, in perceiving time as an "extension", they regard this as a natural reality which has an objective character. This is why having once made the fundamental definition of time as an "extension", they go further and apply to it the property of being "a measure and criterion of both fastness and slowness".<sup>285</sup>

In contrast, Origen maintains the notion of God's radical transcendence to the world; and not only that, but he also holds a different, namely a broader, conception of the world. Hence he forms his conception of time accordingly. He introduces a notion of relativity as far as the perception of time is concerned either from God or from the human point of view. But he goes as far as to apply this notion of

relative experience of time referring to different ranks of life. In the *commMatt* he states:

"And you should see that we may regard as day the whole of the present aeon, which is long with respect to us, but it is short and consisting just of a few years with respect to the life of God and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. And something similar can be said about the blessed powers who have ascended into places which are higher compared to those many existing under the Holy Trinity. For the present aeon has the same relation to their life, as a day in human life in comparison with the whole time that a human being lives".<sup>287</sup>

It is out of his conviction of a relativity in the perception of time that, in *deOr*, it is stated that "there is nothing wonderful in the fact that with God the whole aeon is reckoned as the extension of one of our days; and in my view, as even less."<sup>288</sup>

**Conclusion.** The questions about time in itself which Origen discusses may seem quite simple in the first place, yet they are not simple at all. For the question of the reality of time was a highly controversial one -and still is. The arguments from the time of the Eleatic philosophers until the Sceptics were raising strong doubts as to whether time really "exists" in itself. Aristotle's syllogisms had contributed to such a consideration, also.<sup>289</sup> To the Stoics, time was just a "something" between being and non-being, as "time was one of what they called incorporeals, which are despised by them as inactive and not being and existing only in bare mind".<sup>290</sup> To Gnostics, on the other hand, time has no full reality<sup>291</sup> and their tendency is to negate and to annul it. Time is not a Platonic "image" of eternity or even a Plotinian "imitation" of it; it is at best a caricature of eternity and it is so far removed from its model that, in the final analysis, it is regarded as a lie.<sup>292</sup>

Even in our day there are views which strongly deny the reality of

time. Prominent among them is that of J.M.E. McTaggart<sup>293</sup> which has enjoyed much attention amongst those who study the problem of time. Although it has been argued that the words expressing flow could be replaced by other time-words not expressing flow<sup>294</sup> this view has been resisted by scholars such as R. Gale<sup>295</sup> whereas others have conceded the replaceability of flowing-words in certain restricted contexts.<sup>296</sup> On the other hand, the idea of flowing time has been heavily attacked by other scholars such as D.C. Williams<sup>297</sup> and D.H. Mellor.<sup>298</sup> Besides, in Physics there is a recent version of the view that time might exist, but with a lower degree of reality; this view is different from what the Stoics might be regarded to hold, in as much as it suggests that time depends on a more fundamental and nontemporal reality.<sup>299</sup>

In short, the question of the reality of time has received a vast variety of answers: Time is real, time is unreal, time is of a quasi-reality (a view equally appealing to schools as rival—even on the question of time—as the Stoics and Epicureans),<sup>300</sup> it is of lower degree of reality; time in itself may be real but at least its divisions are in mind; the whole of time is present (a view of Appolodorus of Seleucia, 130 BC) or the present corresponds to the minimum perceptible period (Poseidonius of Apamea, 135–55 BC); time comes along in indivisible atoms,<sup>301</sup> or in divisible leaps,<sup>302</sup> there is a kind of time which does not flow or time in itself flows or moves.<sup>303</sup>

These references are but an example of the intensive controversy which has raged from antiquity until to our day. It is against this background<sup>304</sup> that Origen's views about time in itself should be seen. For it is only thus that his decisive contribution to a certain (namely, Christian) view of time can be really appreciated. Although he held a psychological view of time, his main and fundamental conception of it was that time is an objective element in the make-up of the world. He admits the Aristotelian view that human discourse can be but *tensed*.<sup>305</sup>



but in Origen there is nothing of the Aristotelian doubts about the full reality of time and particularly of the "now".

In modern thought there is also much controversy as to whether *universals* (such as "truth", "justice", etc.) are to be regarded as timeless or not. For example S. McCall denies the idea that *truth* is timeless.<sup>305</sup> On the contrary, others such as W.V.O. Quine<sup>307</sup> and N. Goodman regard truth as timeless.<sup>308</sup> On these questions Origen has also provided his own answers long time ago. His notions of the "conceptions" of the Son clearly demonstrate his views on questions which even today stand in the center of controversy about time. Origen would have no hesitation in declaring that *truth is not timeless*. For "truth" is but a conception of the Son and it is among these conceptions which "became" together with time.<sup>309</sup> Thus one can see that issues which are modern (and all the indications are that they will keep on being questions of controversy) have been addressed by Origen in terms of his theology. As for his notion of relativity in the conception of time, this is a point where the "psychological" and the "objective" view of time are closely correlated. We have reasons to believe that a further study of this particular topic could show that Origen's conception of time is not only modern, but it has anticipated the future development of the problematique of time to an extent which should be treated in a study of its own.

## §2. Prolongation of time

As he does with all pivotal notions in his thought, Origen grounds his notion of prolongation of time in the Scripture. There are two particular passages in which he deems that the origin as well as the answer to this question would be found.

The first is found in Heb.9,26: "For then he must often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but once and for all at the

end of aeons he has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

The second passage is from the Eph.2,7 which says: "That in the aeons to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."<sup>310</sup>

What Origen wonders about is how is it possible, on the one hand to speak of "end of aeons" and, on the other, to speak of "aeons to come". In *de Or* he states this question thus: "...it has occurred many times to me and I wonder when I compare two apostolic expressions, namely how there is an 'end of aeons' in which 'once' 'in order to put away sin' Jesus 'has appeared', if there are coming aeons..."<sup>311</sup>

This juxtaposition of the two scriptural passages is the springboard of Origen's reflections on prolongation of time. A little further in the same work that he states his own answer on the question: "...and in reflecting about things of this kind, I think that, it happens in the same way as the end of the year is the last month, after which there comes the beginning of another month; similarly this present aeon is the end of many aeons which comprise a year, as it were, after which some future aeons will come, the aeon to come being their beginning; and it is in those aeons that God will show 'the riches of his grace in his kindness' "<sup>312</sup>

Besides, the conviction of Origen that a lifetime is not sufficient a period for a human being to reach perfection is a factor for him to employ the notion of prolongation of time. In *homJer* he states that anyone who passes away is "going out" holding both "hay and reed" and "gold and silver and a precious stone" in his hands, that is, he "goes out" of this life having committed both sins and good deeds. His question is what is going to happen to this creature. His answer is that consummation, as purifying fire, destroys "hay and reed", that is, what is evil; for "in the holy scriptures can be found that God is stating first

what is dimmer and then what is better".<sup>313</sup> It is out of the need for this "then" to take place that the notion of prolongation of time is employed. So it is possible to consider that there will be time for rational creatures to strive further for their return to God.<sup>314</sup>

In employing this exegesis, Origen feels that he has established a way to explain the scriptural passages so that they do not seem contradictory. This exegesis allows those two passages to be regarded as consistent, namely as expressing one unique conception of time. Hence, he appeals sometimes to one of them and sometimes to the other.<sup>315</sup>

This is the scriptural basis of Origen's notion of prolongation of time. His view is that the world had a beginning which coincides with the occurrence of the fall, which marked the beginning of time. The movement of the world in time thereafter takes place in periods, which are called by the scriptural name "aeons". This conception enables Origen to preserve both the doctrine of the Church that the world had a beginning<sup>316</sup> and his personal view, namely that the whole of time comprises periods or "aeons".

It is again in Scripture, namely in Isaiah (Is. 65,22), that Origen seeks for authority for his view that there will be a future world: "For Isaiah teaches that there will be another world after this, when he says 'There shall be a new earth, which I will cause to endure in my sight, said the Lord'.<sup>317</sup>

Accordingly, he appeals to Solomon<sup>318</sup> for his view that previous worlds have already existed: "And that there were other worlds before this one Ecclesiastes shows when he says: 'What is it that hath been? Even that which shall be. And what is it that hath been created? That very thing which is to be created; and there is nothing at all new under the sun. If one should speak and say 'See, this is new; it hath been already in the ages which were before us'.<sup>319</sup>

The conclusion drawn out of this, is that "...clearly the end of this world is the beginning of the world to come."<sup>320</sup>

As the above-mentioned scriptural passages are deemed as providing an authoritative ground for the notion of prolonged space-time, the conclusion is articulated accordingly:

"By these testimonies each proposition is proved at the same time, namely, that there were ages in the past and that there will be others hereafter. We must not suppose, however, that several worlds existed at the same time, but that after this one another will exist in its turn."<sup>321</sup> At another point of the same work it is also stated: "This world, however, which is itself called an 'age',<sup>322</sup> is said to be the end of many ages ... But after the present age, which is said to have been made for the consummation of other ages, there will yet be further 'ages to come'; for we learn this plainly from Paul himself when he says, 'that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us'.<sup>323</sup> He did not say 'in the age to come'; nor 'in two ages'; but 'in the ages to come'. I think, therefore, that the indications of the statement point to many ages."<sup>324</sup>

Thus "the present aeon" is just one in the series of aeons past and future; this is why Origen refers to "*this* world and aeon",<sup>325</sup> by "this" denoting that this aeon is one of the many in the series; and this is why he speaks of "the future aeon"<sup>326</sup> as well as of "the forthcoming aeons".<sup>327</sup>

As these views are also found in the works in Greek, we may admit that these points in the *Princ* express Origen's authentic thought. It should also be noticed that Origen is consistent with his fundamental view of time as "extended alongside with" the "structure" of this world; for there is always a unique correspondence between world and time; this means that in every moment of time there is only this single<sup>328</sup> world. The multitude of worlds is understood only in terms of

succession and not of simultaneous co-existence -a case which is explicitly excluded.

It is in the light of this analysis that the distinction between "ages" and "periods of time" should be understood; "...the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit must be understood as transcending all time and all ages and all eternity. ... The rest of things, however, which are external to the Trinity, must be measured by ages and periods of time."<sup>329</sup> The term "age" is used to express the duration of a cosmic period, whereas the term "periods of time" is used indefinitely in order to express a period of time either longer or shorter than that of an "aeon".

Thus the motion of the world in time is realized through periods of time called "aeons" or "ages"; the whole of time, therefore, is consisted of consecutive aeons and is something "longer" than an age. On this subject Origen states his view as follows:

"If, however, there is something greater than the ages, -so that among created beings we think of ages, but among those who exceed and surpass visible created beings, something still greater<sup>330</sup> which will perhaps exist at the 'restitution of all things'<sup>331</sup> when the universe reaches its perfect end, then possibly that period in which the consummation of all things will happen is to be understood as something more than an age. In regard to this I am influenced by the authority of holy scripture, which says, 'For an age and still more'. Now when it says 'still more', undoubtedly it wishes something more than an age to be understood."<sup>332</sup>

Thus Origen asserts that this entire conception of successive cosmic periods stems from the questions raised to him by the juxtaposition of scriptural passages. He also deems that the answer to his questions is also found in the Scripture, namely in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Hebrews, Isaiah and Ecclesiastes. In other words, he

asserts that it is entirely in the Scripture that both the origin and the solution of these questions are to be found.

Nevertheless, the notion of successive worlds and the emergence of a world after the consummation of the previous one, was one of the main Stoic doctrines. Tatian, for example, states that we should "leave aside" the allegations of "Zeno, who claims that the same people in the same situations will occur again, namely that Anytus and Meletus will accuse again, Voussiris will be again a foreign-killer and Hercules will again commit the deeds".<sup>333</sup>

Indeed, all those who accused Origen for his concept of successive worlds have attempted to connect his views with the Stoic claims. Thus in the *Princ.* as edited by Koetschau and translated in English by G.W. Butterworth, we find the following note: "In Theophilus of Alexandria's Paschal letter, translated by Jerome in his Ep. 96, we also find the following: 'Nor does any man die over and over again, as Origen dared to write, in his desire to establish the most impious doctrine of the Stoics by the authority of the divine scriptures.' "; and the note continues as follows: "Rufinus has carefully avoided giving the views that Origen really expressed"<sup>334</sup> obviously implying that these views of Origen might offer ground to the above-mentioned accusations of Theophilus of Alexandria.

It is Origen himself, however, who neither ignores nor does he try to conceal the fact that this notion of successive worlds seems to have some similarity to that of the Greeks;<sup>335</sup> but he explicitly states his opinion on the assertion about the recurrence of identical worlds: He regards this belief as "ludicrous"<sup>336</sup> and refers directly to the views of the Stoics on the subject. So, in *Cels.* he states:

"I do not know why Celsus in writing against us thought it profitable to throw out an opinion which needs much proof, or at least a plausible argument, to show as convincingly as possible that 'the period

of mortal life is similar from beginning to end, and it is inevitable that according to the determined cycles the same things always have happened, are now happening, and will happen'. If this is true, free will is destroyed. For if 'it is inevitable that in the period of mortal life according to the determined cycles the same things always have happened, are now happening and will happen', it is obviously inevitable that Socrates will always be a philosopher and be accused of introducing new deities and of corrupting the youth; Anytus and Meletus will always be accusing him, and the council of the Areopagus will vote for his condemnation to death by hemlock.<sup>337</sup> Thus also it is inevitable that according to the predetermined cycles Phalaris will always be a tyrant, Alexander of Pherae will commit the same atrocities, and those condemned to the bull of Phalaris will always groan inside it. If this is admitted, I do not see how free will can be preserved, and how any praise or blame can be reasonable. The reply to this assumption of Celsus will be that if 'the period of mortal life is similar from the beginning to end', and if 'it is inevitable that according to the determined cycles the same things always have happened, are now happening and will happen', then it is inevitable that Moses will always come out of Egypt with the people of the Jews; Jesus will again come to visit this life and will do the same things that he has done, not just once but an infinite number of times according to the cycles. Furthermore, the same people will be Christians in the determined cycles, and again Celsus will write his book, though he has written it before an infinite number of times.

Celsus affirms that it is only 'the period of mortal life' which 'according to the determined cycles' has of necessity always been, and is now, and will be identical. But most of the Stoics say that this is true not only of the period of mortal life, but also of immortal life and of those they regard as gods.<sup>338</sup> For after the general conflagration of the

universe, which has happened and will happen an infinite number of times, the same order of all things from beginning to end not only has happened but also will happen. In attempting to remedy the absurdities in some way the Stoics say in every cycle all men will be in some unknown way indistinguishable from those of former cycles. To avoid supposing that Socrates will live again, they say it will be someone indistinguishable from Socrates, who will marry someone indistinguishable from Xanthippe, and will be accused by men indistinguishable from Anytus and Meletus. But I do not know how the world can always be the same, and one world not merely indistinguishable from one another, while the things in it are not the same but are indistinguishable. However, the primary argument in reply to the words of Celsus and the Stoics will be discussed elsewhere at a more convenient time, since at the present moment it is not relevant to our immediate object to give a further discussion here."<sup>339</sup>

Indeed, Origen returns to this question later, in order to argue against the Stoic doctrine of recurrence of identical worlds.

"The Stoics maintain that the universe periodically undergoes a conflagration and after that a restoration of order in which everything is indistinguishable from what happened in the previous restoration of the world. All those of them who have respected the doctrine<sup>340</sup> have said that there is a slight and very minute difference between one period and the events in the period before it. Now these men say that in the succeeding period it will be the same again: Socrates will again be the son of Sophroniscus and be an Athenian, and Phaenarete will again marry Sophroniscus and give birth to him. Therefore, although they do not use the word 'resurrection' at least they have the idea when they say that Socrates will rise again after originating from the seed of Sophroniscus and will be formed in the womb of Paenarete, and after being educated at Athens will become a philosopher; and something like



his previous philosophy will rise again and will similarly be indistinguishable from the one before. Moreover, Anytus and Meletus will rise again as Socrates' accusers, and the council of Areopagus will condemn him. And, what is more ludicrous than this, Socrates will put on clothes which will be indistinguishable from those of the previous period, and will be in poverty and in a city called Athens which will be indistinguishable from that before. Phalaris will again be a tyrant, with a cruelty indistinguishable from that of the previous world, and will condemn men also indistinguishable from those before. But why need I enumerate the doctrine about these matters held by the Stoic philosophers, even though Celsus does not laugh at it but probably even respects it, since he thinks that 'Zeno was wiser than Jesus'." <sup>341</sup>

What those passages show is that Origen is totally opposed to the Stoic doctrine of recurrence of identical worlds; and in the light of those passages we can accept those similar passages in the *Princ* as expressing the authentic views of Origen. Thus the above-mentioned testimonies adduced of G. Butterworth <sup>342</sup> which imply some kind of connexion of Origen's notion with the Stoic view on the subject, is unjustified and ungrounded; for even in the *Princ* Origen's views are stated with equal clarity:

"Moreover, as for those who maintain that worlds similar to each other and in all respects alike sometimes come into existence, I do not know what proofs they can bring in support of this theory. For if it is said that there is to be a world similar in all respects to the present world, then it will happen that Adam and Eve will again do what they did before, there will be another flood, the same Moses will once more lead a people numbering six hundred thousand out of Egypt, Judas also will twice betray his Lord, Saul will a second time keep the clothes of those who are stoning Stephen, and we shall say that every deed which has been done in this life must be done again. I do not think that this can be

established by any reasoning, if souls are actuated by freedom of choice and maintain their progress or the reverse in accordance with the power of their own free will. For souls are not driven on some revolving course which brings them into the same cycle again after many ages, with the result that they do or desire this or that, but they direct the course of their deeds toward whatever end the freedom of their individual minds may aim at.

What these men say, however, is the same as if one were to maintain that if a bushel of corn were poured out on the ground it could happen that on two occasions the grains would fall exactly the same positions, so that each single grain would lie the second time next to that grain besides which it was thrown at the first, and the bushel would be scattered in the same order and with the same marks as formerly. Certainly this is an utterly impossible thing to happen with the innumerable grains of a bushel, even if they were to be poured out again and again for countless ages. It seems to me, then, impossible that the world could be restored again a second time with the same order and the same number of births, deaths and actions; but worlds may exist that are diverse, having variations by no means slight, so that for certain clear causes the condition of one may be better, while another for different causes may be worse, and another intermediate. What may be the number or measure of these worlds I confess I do not know."<sup>343</sup>

It is interesting to note that Origen does not confine his criticism of the opinion of recurrence of identical worlds only to the Stoics, but he extends his criticism to other Greeks as well, namely to "the Pythagoreans and Platonists",<sup>344</sup> who "hold similar mistaken opinions",<sup>345</sup> he even stated that "the learned men among Egyptians" hold similar views.<sup>346</sup>

"Furthermore, though the Pythagoreans and Platonists maintain that the whole is indestructible, yet they fall into similar absurdities.

For when in certain fixed cycles the stars adopt the same configurations and relationships to each other, they say that everything on earth is in the same position as it was at the last time when that relationship of the stars in the universe was the same.<sup>347</sup> According, then, to this doctrine it is inevitable that when after a long period the stars come into the same relationship to one another which they had in the time of Socrates, Socrates will again be born of the same parents and suffer the same attacks, and will be accused by Anytus and Meletus, and be condemned by the council of the Areopagus. Moreover, are the learned men among the Egyptians who have similar traditions respected and not laughed at by Celsus and his like?"<sup>348</sup>

In the same work, namely in *Cels*, Origen does not only criticize those who hold the doctrine of recurrence of identical worlds, but also does not fail to articulate his own opinion on the question, in a passage which reads thus:

"As for us" we "say that the universe is cared for by God in accordance with the conditions of the free will of each man, and that as far as possible it is always being led on to be better, and we know that the nature of our free will is to admit various possibilities (for it cannot achieve the entirely unchangeable nature of God)".<sup>349</sup>

It is remarkable that H. Sasse regards that the aforementioned passage of Ecclesiastes *necessarily* implies the doctrine of eternal recurrence, namely "periods of the world in their infinite succession".<sup>350</sup> Origen, however, regards this scriptural passage as implying only the *succession* of worlds, which is not infinite -not only because time in itself is not infinite, but also because he clearly portrays the notion of the "end" of space-time, as we shall see in chapter 5.

**The cause of consummation.** This aeon will be consummated because there is "evil" in it; this is a conviction of Origen. Quoting Matt.6,34 he states: "The blessed Paul says; 'redeeming the time, because

the days are evil<sup>351</sup> (and if they are evil, then there is evil in them); and Jacob 'few and evil have my days been',<sup>352</sup> and Moses in the Psalm 'the days of our years in these years'.<sup>353</sup> And everywhere in the scripture the days of this aeon are called as evil".<sup>354</sup> Accordingly, quoting Matt.6,34, he calls the present aeon allegorically as "present day" saying the "present day is one of being tormented and hard work and suffering hardship and pain",<sup>355</sup> for his conviction is that "to the just this aeon is a winter",<sup>356</sup> as he adds: "This entire aeon is a night, it is darkness. Light is still kept from you; you now see through a glass yet you will see the light in the future. Nevertheless this entire aeon is a night."<sup>357</sup> Further in the same work, Origen reiterates: "This entire aeon is a night. Light is kept from you. What you now take as light, is just what you see it through a glass; 'And in thy light we shall see light'.<sup>358</sup> We shall see it in the future. Yet this aeon is a night; and since it is a night, there are many wars, many beasts going around.",<sup>359</sup> for it is evil that reigns during the present aeon; and referring to the Satan he states that "the ruler of this aeon is allegorically called as Caesar".<sup>360</sup>

Origen is quite explicit as to what is the real cause of consummation: "Curse and lie are the cause of consummation; therefore if they did not exist, neither anger nor consummation would exist, too".<sup>361</sup> It is out of God's anger at the evil accumulated in the world that consummation takes place. Referring to Ez.5,13 "Thus shall mine anger be accomplished" (καί συντελεσθήσεται ὁ θυμός μου) he comments thus: "This denotes that the anger of God will come to an end in the same way that world will be consumed."<sup>362</sup> Hence "We maintain that the cause of these events is the excessive torrent of evil which is purged by a flood or conflagration".<sup>363</sup> And further; "When, therefore, He is said to be a consuming fire, we inquire what is fit to be consumed by God; and we say that as fire God consumes evil and the actions resulting from it".<sup>364</sup> So, "In this sense also 'rivers of fire' are said to be 'before' God,

since he makes the evil which has permeated the whole soul to disappear."<sup>365</sup>

Thus Origen concludes: "Accordingly, we do not deny the reality of the purifying fire and the destruction of the world to destroy evil and renew everything that exists,<sup>366</sup> since we say that we have learnt these things from the prophets out of the sacred books."<sup>367</sup>

Thus the arrangement of the next world stems from free moral action. Nevertheless this conception does not only refer to the arrangement of the world, but also to the *duration* of a certain cosmic period, namely of an aeon. In his view, this period of time is not a constant "natural" datum, it is not pre-arranged by any natural law; but it is directly related to moral action. This means that the duration of a cosmic period depends on the "evil" (κακία) accumulated in the world during a certain aeon.

In the *commJohn* it is stated that there is a "certain reason" behind the occurrence of "cataclysm" (as in Gen.6,13 ff); and this reason is the purpose for the "seed of Cain" "to be extinguished". In order to ground this assertion Origen again appeals to the Scripture, namely to the Wisdom of Solomon,<sup>368</sup> as well as to Deuteronomy, asserting that the destruction of Sodomah and Gomorah was "a work of the good God". Certain references in Psalms<sup>369</sup> about destruction occurred in Egypt are taken to imply the same notion.<sup>370</sup> For it is a conviction of Origen that "It is not in accord with God's character not to stop the spread of evil and bring moral renewal."<sup>371</sup>

Hence the "destruction" of the world, which marks the end of an aeon and, thus, the duration of it, is not due to any natural determinism or any cosmic law. This duration is directly determined by free moral action of rational creatures. In the final analysis, this duration is determined by creaturely freedom itself. This is a major point which contrasts Origen's thought from any pagan conception of cosmic periods

and it is according to this that he opposes Celsus:

"...does not Celsus appear ludicrous when he supposes that 'evils could never either increase or decrease'? For even if 'the nature of the universe is one and the same', the origin of evils is not by any means always the same. Although the nature of some particular individual man is one and the same, things are not always the same where his mind, his reason, and actions are concerned. At one time he may not even have the capacity for reason, while at another time his reason is vitiated by evil, and this varies in its extent either more or less; and sometimes he may have been converted to live virtuously and is making more or less progress, and at times reaches perfection and comes to virtue itself by more or less contemplation. So also even more may this be said of the universe, that, even if it remains one and the same generically, yet the events which happen to the universe are not always the same nor of the same kind. For there are not periods of productivity or of famine all the time, nor always of heavy rain or drought. In this way neither are there determined periods of fertility or famine in the life of good souls; and the flood of bad souls increases or decreases. In fact, for those who want to have the most accurate knowledge of everything that they can, it is an unavoidable doctrine that evils do not always remain the same in number on account of the providence which either watches over earthly affairs or cleanses them by floods or conflagrations, and probably not only earthly things but also those of the whole world<sup>372</sup> which is in need of purification whenever the evil in it becomes extensive."<sup>373</sup>

This "whenever" clearly indicates the fundamental correlation that in Origen's thought exists between free moral action and the duration of an aeon. He does not fail to reject Gnostic as well as Neoplatonic views, according to which it is matter itself which is "evil". In his thought "evil" is closely related to freedom. In his view "ignorance of God is ... among the number of evils, while one of the greatest evils is not to

know the way to worship God and of piety towards him",<sup>374</sup> and he clearly states that "in our view it is not true that 'the matter which dwells among mortals' is responsible for evils."<sup>375</sup> Each person's mind is responsible for the evil which exists in him, and this is what evil is. Evils are the actions which result from it. In our view nothing else is strictly speaking evil."<sup>376</sup>

Hence, not only the notion of successive worlds and aeons, but also that of the "limits" of the consecutive aeons realized by destructions of the world, are grounded on the Scripture. Nevertheless Origen does not ignore that this idea is found in Greeks, too. For the doctrine of cosmic destructions was held ever since Heraclitus down to early Stoics and even by Stoics nearly contemporary to Origen, as Marcus Aurelius.

However, it has been a constant concern of Origen to contrast his conception of successive worlds from that of the Greeks. Besides, he contends that this doctrine is not actually originated in the Greek thought. He claims that they have taken it from the Hebrews, namely from Moses, yet they have "misunderstood"<sup>377</sup> and falsified it to such an extent that the whole conception is unacceptable to Origen. On this point he argues thus:

"The Greeks also have a doctrine that the earth is periodically purified by a flood or by fire, as Plato also says in one place as follows: 'And then the gods flood the earth, purifying it with waters, some in the mountains...' <sup>378</sup> and so on."<sup>379</sup> Accordingly, he refers to "the Theaetetus, where according to Plato Socrates says: 'But neither is it possible for evils to be destroyed from men, nor for them to find a place among the gods' <sup>380</sup> and so on."; and he further states that "the passage in the Timaeus which says 'And when the gods purify the earth' <sup>381</sup> has shown that when the earth is cleansed by water it has fewer evils than it had during the time before it was purified. And in agreement with the opinion of Plato we maintain that at times evils are less, on account of

the passage in the Theaetetus that says 'evils cannot be destroyed from men'."<sup>382</sup>

Origen, therefore, knows the Greek views on the subject; yet he insists that it is the Hebrews where the idea has been taken from:

"...according to the opinion of some Greeks (probably borrowing from the very ancient nation of the Hebrews) the fire that is brought on the world is purifying, and it is probable that it is applied to each individual who needs judgement by fire together with healing. The fire burns does not consume utterly those who have no matter which needs to be destroyed by it, while it burns and does utterly consume those who have built 'wood, hay, or stubble'<sup>383</sup> on the building (as it is allegorically called) by their actions, words, and thoughts. The divine scriptures say that the Lord 'like the fire of a smelting-furnace and like a cleaner's herb'<sup>384</sup> will visit each individual who is in need, because they have been adulterated by the evil flood of matter, as it were, which results from sin; and I say that they need fire which, so to speak, refines those adulterated by 'copper', 'and tin, and lead'.<sup>385</sup> Anyone who is interested may learn these things from the prophet Ezekiel."<sup>386</sup>

It is because of Celsus' claim that the Christians "misunderstood what is said by the Greeks or barbarians about these matters"<sup>387</sup> that Origen insists that it is the Greeks who have "misunderstood" and therefore falsified the original conception; for Celsus, "failed to give attention to the antiquity of Moses, who is related by certain Greek writers to have lived in the time of Inachus the son of Phoroneus. He is also admitted by Egyptians to be of great antiquity, and also by those who compiled Phoenician history. Anyone interested may read the two books of Flavius Josephus on the Antiquity of the Jews, that he may know how Moses was more ancient than those who said that at long intervals of time there are floods and conflagrations in the world."<sup>388</sup> And at another point Origen points out that "Moses is much earlier than



Homer and even than the invention of the Greek alphabet."<sup>389</sup>

It is therefore Origen's belief that it is the Greeks who have "misunderstood" the idea of "destructions" of the world, which is originated in the scripture:

"...Moses and some of the prophets, being men of great antiquity, did not receive from others the idea of the world-conflagration. The truth is rather, if we may pay regard to the matter of their dates, that others misunderstood them and failed to reproduce accurately what they said, and invented the notion that identical occurrences happen periodically, which are indistinguishable from one another in both their essential and incidental characteristics. But we do not attribute either the flood or the conflagration to any cycles and periodical conjunctions of the stars."<sup>390</sup>

What all these show is the insistence of Origen on contrasting his notion of successive aeons from that of the Greeks and particularly of the Stoics.

However Origen does not hesitate to employ Stoic terminology on the subject; for the fact is that it was Marcus Aurelius who first used the term "aeon" in this sense, namely it is he who called each world-cycle itself as "aeon".<sup>391</sup> Nevertheless Marcus used the same term to indicate a notion not held by Origen, namely that of infinite time; for he speaks of infinite time as proceeding from age to age.<sup>392</sup> Earlier Stoics used simply the term "infinite time". It was Marcus Aurelius that used the term "aeon" in order to indicate both the infinite time of the universe as well as the time from the beginning until the end of a certain cosmic cycle.<sup>393</sup>

One may wonder why Origen is so insistent on contrasting his conception with that of the Greeks and why again and again he appeals to those scriptural passages which he deems as grounding this notion. The deeper motive of Origen here lies exactly in his aim to denote his

different conception of time.

The question discussed above is a crucial one. For the attitude to it implies two radically different conceptions of time. To the Stoics the opinion of identical recurrence of worlds entails some very significant consequences: 1. Human freedom is dismantled from its actual content, to an extent that it makes no sense at all.<sup>394</sup> 2. Conflagration, as the "end" of a cosmic period, is a purely "natural" phenomenon. 3. The period of time in which a "period" is stretched is constant; among earlier Greeks, Heraclitus use to call this period as the "Great Year" (μεγάλος ἐνιαυτός). 4. The world itself, in its motion in time, moves towards nowhere. This is what has made some to speak of "cyclic" time in Greek thought.

Origen is radically opposed to all those fundamental implications. The length of a cosmic period has not a definite length of time; consummation of a world has purely moral causes; and the world is directed towards an end. It is important to focus our attention on a phrase of *Princ*: "For souls are not driven on some revolving course which brings them into the same cycle again after many ages, with the result that they do or desire this or that, but they direct the course of their deeds toward whatever end the freedom of their individual minds may aim at."<sup>395</sup> This view clearly denotes a conception of time according to which the course of events is not a meaningless repetition but a meaningful striving and course towards a goal and an end.

It is then a fundamental conviction of Origen that what is "next" is directly related to the freedom of rational beings; for they are not imprisoned in a depressive cosmic recurrence but it is their freedom which actually determines the course of the world. This is why, in the *de Or*, he declares that he does not know how the next world will be arranged; (τῷ μέλλοντι μετὰ ταῦτα οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως οικονομησόμενου).<sup>396</sup>

When, in *Cels*, Origen argues extensively against the Stoic doctrine

of identical recurrence of worlds, his main argument is that such a conception actually abolishes freedom. If the Stoic doctrine is accepted "I do not know how our freedom of will will be saved and how either praises or blames will be justified".<sup>397</sup> For freedom is the fundamental constitutive element of moral action; and it is an axiom that "if you deprive virtue from willingness, you have also deprived virtue from its essence".<sup>398</sup> In the *commJohn*, too, the view that the future arrangement of the world is contingent is reiterated; "...and I do not know if similar things or even worse may happen in long recurring periods of time."<sup>399</sup>

Thus, Origen has not a simply natural conception of time. He also has a moral conception of it, as time acquires a deeper meaning being related to moral action and freedom. It is not a natural law but free moral action that will determine the length of an aeon.<sup>400</sup> In the light of this view, time has a different meaning than that in the Greeks. For what they had endeavoured was to capture a scientific ideal; to know the cosmic process as a whole, to render nature wholly transparent to understanding. All particulars were to be understood in terms of natural universal law. This "natural" conception of the meaning of being into the world had a fundamental implication. In such an existential attitude man stands impartial in the natural process and what remains to him is "to know" that the cosmic process is not any kind of evolution towards any final goal, but just an endless repetition.

This is the fundamental notion that Origen rejects. To him there is a vision of a final end<sup>401</sup> because there is a promise of that. In order to attain this end though there is a task to be accomplished; and this task will be carried out and the goal will be reached only through time and in time, as we shall argue later in this work.

What characterizes Origen's conception of time is that he neither denies responsibility nor does he accept any notion of ultimate triviality. It is thus that Origen establishes a break between

## Christianity and Classicism.

Hence, although the notion of "recurrence" appears to have an essential similarity to the Stoic one, however there is a difference which is far more profound: The Stoics regarded prolongation of time as an established natural law from which they simply cannot escape. Marcus Aurelius had already claimed that there is nothing to be gained by *prolonging* life<sup>402</sup> and Seneca argued that perfection does not require prolongation, as life can be made perfect in a finite time, even if it is short.<sup>403</sup> To Origen, however, prolongation<sup>404</sup> is *needed* because perfection has an actual spatio-temporal [s. chapter 4] content and *prolonged* life does not mean *repeated* life, but it means a process towards a *goal*. In fact, therefore, what constitutes the essential difference in the notion prolongation between the Stoics (and other Greeks, too, such as Aristotle<sup>405</sup> and Epicurus)<sup>406</sup> and Origen is a radically different conception of time. We shall take the opportunity to elaborate on particular facets of this crucial point in due course in this work.

It is in the light of this view that Origen's conception of "consummation" (συντέλεια) should be viewed. He speaks of "the destruction of the world, which our writings call as consummation" during which "changes in bodies occur according to ways that have been appointed" and "world is constituted of these bodies".<sup>407</sup> The scriptural passages to which he alludes are not only the Matt. 13,39 and Heb. 9,26 which H. Chadwick cites,<sup>408</sup> but also the Matt.13,40, Matt.13,49, Matt.24,3 and Matt.28,20: On this, H. Chadwick points out that pagan writers do not use the term συντέλεια in this sense.<sup>409</sup> This is true; and it is exactly on this very fact that one should also see Origen's insistence on contrasting his own views with the pagan ones. The deeper difference of Origen's conception of consummation lies on his conception of "cosmos", namely in his perception of the world as mainly comprising

rational beings whereas the "natural" environment of these particular "worlds" is treated as a matter of secondary importance. What is of significance is not any notion of "consummation" as destruction of the natural world itself. It is the "consummation" of rational creatures which is the subject of the main (if not exclusive) interest in Origen's thought. The very term *συντέλεια* (consummation) is derived from the term *τέλος* (end) and it primarily is perceived as the end of the existential status in a certain rank of life and judgment of action during the time of being there. Thus, either conflagration or cataclysm are regarded mainly as the *cause of end of a certain arrangement of rational life in various kinds of bodies* whereas the question of the existence of the world as a natural reality is of not treated in much detail. This is the sense in which Origen's conception of *συντέλεια* should be regarded as different from the pagan one. After all, Origen was above all a theologian, and, although he had a very good command of the Physics of his era, he was unwilling to carry out a debate on grounds of Physics. However, in arguing against Celsus he articulates, to a certain extent, his view of "consummation" in a natural sense:

"Next, because Celsus suspects or perhaps even himself understands the answer that could be made by those who reply to the question about those destroyed by the flood, he says: If he does not destroy his own offsprings, 'where is he to banish them out of the world which he himself made?' We reply to this the He does not take those who suffered in the flood out of the world which consists of heaven and earth. He delivers them rather from the life in the flesh and, at the same time as He takes them away from these bodies he also takes them away from their being on earth, which in many place in the scriptures is usually called the world."<sup>410</sup> Thus "those who suffer in the flood are not taken out of the world in an absolute sense", as the world is consisting of particular "worlds", which although not seen are nevertheless

included into the world".<sup>411</sup>

What is perfectly clear in Origen's thought is that "consummation" is an occurrence affecting the entirety of the world and not only the earth; this is why he affirms that "we do not deny the reality of purifying fire and the destruction of the world to destroy evil and renew the *whole* (τοῦ παντός) [world]."<sup>412</sup> Besides, it is explicitly stated that "floods and conflagrations" take place in order to purify "not only earthly things but the whole world" (οὐ τὰ ἐνὶ γῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ) whenever evil in it becomes extensive".<sup>413</sup> Although in Origen's thought this affirmation mainly pertains to rational creatures, it nevertheless is very near to the Stoic one, at least in letter. This is why H. von Arnim has included an extensive part of this section of *Celsus* in his edition of *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* reckoning that at this point Origen is quoting Chrysippus' views.<sup>414</sup>

It is obvious, therefore, that "consummation" is of interest in as much as it has to do with the destiny of rational creatures and not of the natural status of the world, as it was with the pagan thinkers. Origen is certainly familiar with this kind of knowledge and deals with it only in case he is challenged to do so. This is what he does in the same work speaking his perception of consummation: He expounds his views of the "destruction of the world", of the "nature of bodies" and on the nature of "matter" on a natural basis. Indeed he devotes a whole section<sup>415</sup> to this discussion. But the end of this section is quite indicative of the overall direction and aims of his thought. He feels that such a kind of discussion is entirely out of the purposes of his theology and outside the purpose of this particular work; so he rather briskly puts an end to this section by this statement:

"But we are not going to now discuss the nature of the world when we reply to the attacks of Celsus" (ἀλλ' οὐ ταῦτα νῦν πρόκειται ἀπαντῶσιν ἡμῖν πρὸς τὰς τοῦ Κέλσου κατηγορίας φυσιολογεῖν).<sup>416</sup>

Indeed, this statement constitutes an expressive element of Origen's own existential presuppositions in articulating his thought and particularly his conception of time. This is why he deals with the question of consummation in a way different from that of the pagan philosophers. His aim is to stress the theological, not the natural, implications of this conception. And it in the light of this aim of Origen's that his notion of consummation (like his entire conception of time) should be understood.

**The end of aeon and judgement.** It is from this different conception of time that Origen holds a different conception of the end of each cosmic cycle. This end is not just a moment in the continuous cosmic process but is a moment of a special significance. For this end marks not only the consummation of the aeon but also the time when God judges rational beings for their action during the consummated aeon.

This is also a point which contrasts Origen's whole conception of cosmic periods to that of the Stoics. In his insistence in underlining this difference, he stresses this point and refers to God as follows:

"While remaining unchanged in essence, He comes down in his providence and care for human affairs. We show that the divine scriptures also say that God is not subject to change in the words 'But thou art the same'<sup>417</sup> and 'I change not.'<sup>418</sup> But the gods of Epicurus, who are compounded of atoms and, in so far as they are compounded, are liable to dissolution, are at pains to throw off the atoms which may cause their destruction. Furthermore, the God of the Stoics in that He is corporeal, at one time when the conflagration occurs consists entirely of mind, while at another time, when the new world-order comes, he becomes a part of it. Not even they have been able to perceive clearly the true conception of God's nature, as being entirely incorruptible, simple, uncompounded, and indivisible."<sup>419</sup>

Furthermore he states: "The oversight and providence of God does

permeate all things, but not like the spirit of the Stoics. Providence does contain them as a containing substance, since it is corporeal matter which is contained, but as a divine power which has comprehended the things which are contained. According to the opinion of the Stoics, who maintain that the first principles are corporeal, and who on this account hold that everything is destructible and venture even to make the supreme God Himself destructible<sup>420</sup> (unless this seemed to them to be utterly outrageous), even the Logos of God that comes down to men and to the most insignificant things is nothing other than a material spirit. But in the view of us Christians, who try to show that the rational soul is superior to any material nature and is an invisible and incorporeal essence,<sup>421</sup> the divine Logos is not material. Through him all things were made, and in order that all things may be made by the Logos, he extends not to men only but even to the things supposed to be insignificant which are controlled by nature. The Stoics may destroy everything in a conflagration if they like. But we do not recognize that an incorporeal essence<sup>422</sup> is subject to a conflagration, or that the soul of man or the hypostasis<sup>423</sup> of angels, or thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers is dissolved into fire."<sup>424</sup>

It is because of this conception that Origen regards the end of an aeon not just as a consummation but as a moment of time in which judgement takes place. This is why he says that "the fire that is brought on the world is purifying" and that "it is applied to each individual who needs judgement by fire together with healing".<sup>425</sup> Consummation is not just a natural occurrence, but is closely connected to judgement. This meaning of the end of an aeon is clearly portrayed in *Cels*.

"But if there will be a certain fixed time when the world will be brought to the end which it must necessarily have since it had a beginning, then there will be a certain appointed end of the world and after that a righteous judgement of everyone."<sup>426</sup>



in *commMatt* Origen extensively refers to the end of the aeon as the "end of things" "which is also called consummation of the aeon" and it is then that "the angels of God, who have been ordered to do so, will collect the malicious doctrines grown in the soul" and will discard them into the purifying fire and it is then that judgement will take place.<sup>427</sup> It is then that "God who is above everything will be the just judge of everyone for everything made during his life".<sup>428</sup>

The notion of the end of an aeon as judgement is based upon two fundamental conceptions:

First, God is incorporeal and rational creatures have in themselves an incorporeal element [see chapter 1] which is susceptible of change but not of destruction during a consummation. As discussed in chapter 1, the incorporeal element of a rational creature is in no way held to live as an independent "being". The dualism "corporeal-incorporeal" element of a rational creature is only conceptual, not actual; it exists only in mind as an intellectual abstraction. This is why Origen comments on Matt. 10,28 ("fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell") stating that what this passage teaches is that although "soul is incorporeal" it will be not punished without a body".<sup>429</sup>

Secondly, there is a uniformity of nature of rational creatures. This notion stands beside that of continuity of time and a discontinuity of space as the whole world is held to comprise particular spaces totally separated from each other.

It is pointed out that "all rational beings are of one nature, and it is only on this ground that the justice of God in all his dealings with them can be defended, namely, when each contains within himself the reasons why he has been placed in this or that rank of life".<sup>430</sup> The same notion is found in passages preserved in Greek: "Thus the marvellous works done by God are as it were the rain, while the differing wills are like the tilled and neglected land, though as land they are both of one

nature."<sup>431</sup>

This notion, namely the uniformity of nature of rational creatures, is fundamental in Origen. For his perception of judgement as well as of the outcome of judgement, as rearrangement of bodies, are grounded on this notion. This is why he argues against those who consider higher and lower rational creatures as being of different nature:

"To those, however, who bring in diverse natures (Τοίς δὲ τῶν φύσεως εἰσάγουσι) ... we must answer as follows: If they retain the doctrine that the lost and the saved come 'from one lump'<sup>432</sup> and that the Creator of the saved is also the Creator of the lost, and if he who makes not only the spiritual but also the earthly is good (for this follows from their reasonings), it is none the less possible for one who has become at the present time a vessel of honour in consequence of certain former righteous deeds and yet has not acted similarly here nor in a way befitting a vessel of honour, to become in another aeon a vessel of dishonour; just as on the other hand it is possible for one who by reason of acts older that this life has become here a vessel of dishonour to become, if he amends his ways in the 'new creation',<sup>433</sup> a 'vessel of honour sanctified and meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work'.<sup>435</sup>

It is the conception of the uniformity of nature of rational beings that allows Origen to say that God is "God of the daemons as far as creation is concerned"<sup>435</sup> meaning that God is not responsible for their being daemons, it is their free will which is responsible for that,<sup>436</sup> God is God of the daemons only in as much as they are regarded as creatures. In his *commJohn* Origen rejects any allegation that the "essence of the devil is different from the essence of the other rational beings"<sup>437</sup> arguing that "it is impossible to admit that the essence of the devil is different and that the devil is not susceptible of moral improvement".<sup>438</sup> At that point Origen develops his argument on the question, stating that

we cannot say that an eye which cannot see well is of different essence from an eye which can see well; and if something happens to an ear and it cannot hear well, this is something accidental and does not introduce any difference in its essence of being an ear. Thus devil is responsible for his being evil and God "is in no way responsible for the evil". Therefore "it is the most absurd of all absurdities to blame him who substantiated and created this being".<sup>439</sup>

It is then in accordance with his overall views that Origen deems that devil "became" devil and there was "when he was blameless (ἀμωμος)."<sup>440</sup> So he concludes that "one is son of devil not because of his make-up, nor is someone amongst men called son of God because he has been created as such; and it is clear that it is possible that one who once was a son of devil may become a son of God".<sup>441</sup> Indeed he makes extensive analyses in order to ground his views against those who hold that "there are some creatures who are son of devil due to their creation itself".<sup>442</sup>

Thus the notion of God's radical transcendence as well as his incorporeality allow Origen to articulate his perception of God as a judge during the consummation. This is one of the reasons (though not the main one) that Origen stresses throughout his whole theology that God is both incorporeal (and thus, transcendent in respect to space) and timeless (and thus, transcendent in respect to time).

**The outcome of the judgement.** Origen's conception of the outcome of judgement is based on his conviction that the entire world is material and to his conviction that "matter" (in the sense that he perceives "matter", namely as either "seen" or "not seen") is susceptible of any alteration by the will of God. So he holds that "it is possible for the matter underlying all qualities to possess varying qualities" (δυνατόν αμείβειν ποιότητος τήν υποκειμένην πάσαις ποιότησιν ὕλην)<sup>443</sup> and it is "by nature subject to change, alteration, and transformation"<sup>444</sup> into anything the Creator desires and is capable of possessing any quality

which the Artificer wishes".<sup>445</sup>

Hence Origen affirms that "changes occur in the qualities of bodies" as "by God's will a quality of one kind is imposed upon this particular matter, but afterwards it will have a quality of another kind, one, let us say, which is better and superior".<sup>446</sup>

In view of these passages preserved in Greek, we can corroborate some points in the *Princ* as expressing the authentic views of Origen. Thus he states that "bodily nature admits of diverse and various changes, to such an extent that it can undergo every kind of transformation",<sup>447</sup> and that the nature of rational creatures is "changeable and convertible by the very condition of its being created" and that "bodily nature" is "capable of changing at the Creator's will, by an alteration of qualities, into everything that circumstances might require".<sup>448</sup>

This is the fundamental notion on which Origen grounds his conception of the outcome of a judgement. In his work *se/Ps*, he comments on Psalm 1,5 ("Therefore the impious shall not be resurrected in judgement") as follows:

"Judgement of the just creatures is the transition from the body of this life to the angelic realms; and (judgement of) the impious beings is the transition from the body of this life to dark and dim bodies. For the impious will be resurrected not in the forthcoming judgement, but in the second one."<sup>449</sup> This transition takes place because it is possible for God to "alter" the "quality" of matter, since he "is the creator of it".<sup>450</sup>

In *Ce/s* it is stated that during "the destruction of the world, which our writings call as consummation ... changes in bodies occur according to ways that have been appointed" and "the world is constituted of these bodies".<sup>451</sup> In the light of this notion Origen affirms that "we also know that there are 'both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies' " and "as we believe in the resurrection of the dead, we

affirm that changes occur in the qualities of bodies, since some of them which have been 'sown in corruption are raised in incorruption, and some sown in dishonour are raised in glory', and some sown in weakness are raised in power, and bodies sown natural are raised spiritual".<sup>452</sup>

Hence the outcome of judgement during the consummation of a world is a "transposition", a change of body, namely a transition of a rational being to another rank of life. Thus it is possible for human beings to become angels;<sup>453</sup> for those who are "resurrected" may become a "regime of angels"<sup>454</sup> and in such a case their body will completely change and will become a body worthy of an angel, namely a body "aetheral and brilliant like the nature of the light",<sup>455</sup> for those angels who now are in the heaven were previously men who strived well having human bodies; and so did others before them.<sup>456</sup> Thus he refers to those who, according to their merits (κατά τήν ἀξίαν) enjoy (ἀπολαμβάνοντες) "in the resurrection" (ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει) their now being in the most pure and translucent "spaces" (χωρίοις),<sup>457</sup> and he affirms that it is better to live a life in "aetheral body" (ἐν αἰθερίῳ σώματι) than to live a life "in flesh and blood".<sup>458</sup>

Accordingly it is stated that it is possible for human beings to become superior to angels, if these latter fall.<sup>459</sup> It is also possible that after judgement human beings do not change rank of life, but remain "men saved in Christ".<sup>460</sup> Finally, it is possible that men will be "expelled" and "condemned to go to a place which is without any light at all".<sup>461</sup> At any rate those who are now human beings have been judged in a previous judgement and have been found neither to have fallen too much nor to have committed such deeds as to become angels.<sup>462</sup>

Thus Origen holds that any kind of transformation and transposition is possible as an outcome of a judgement and he accordingly sets forth this idea of his in a more general way:

"It is, therefore, possible that one who is a seed of Abraham to

become also a child of his, by diligence; and it is possible for one who is a child of Abraham to lose being his seed, because of negligence and uncultivation".<sup>463</sup>

In view of this he points out that "it is possible" that "the soul ... may either descend from the highest good to the lowest evil or to be restored from the lowest evil to the highest good",<sup>464</sup> and "in the day of judgement" "the good will be separated from the evil and the righteous from the unrighteous and every individual soul will by the judgement of God be allotted to that place of which his merits have rendered him worthy".<sup>465</sup> Subsequently to this, he holds that "during the consummation, those wicked on the earth will be shaken, while the saints, being mountains<sup>466</sup> will be metathesized the metathesis of Enoch." (Εν τῇ συντελείᾳ οἱ μὲν αμαρτωροὶ ὄντες ταραχθήσονται, οἱ δὲ ἅγιοι, ὄρη, μετατεθήσονται τὴν μετάθεσιν Ενώχ).<sup>467</sup> So God is regarded as "creator and wise and provident and judge", being "judge" as it seems of "the various bodies of rational creatures, and the various worlds" (διὰ τὰ διάφορα σώματα τῶν λογικῶν καὶ τοὺς ποικίλους κόσμους).<sup>468</sup>

In order to ground the notion of "various bodies" Origen appeals to Paul<sup>469</sup> who affirms that "God gives (δίδωσιν) to each a body as he pleased (καθὼς ηθέλησεν)"<sup>470</sup> stating that "as with seeds that are sown, so also with those who are sown, so to speak, in death, and who at the appropriate time out of the bodies that are sown take up (ἀναλαμβάνόντων) the body which is appointed by God for each one in accordance with his merits."<sup>471</sup>

It is quite indicative of Origen's conception of successive aeons that he here uses this participle in the Present Tense, in order to imply that this "taking up" of a body is an occurrence not happening only once but regularly at the end of each aeon. Paul's expression *δίδωσιν* (gives) is also quite appropriate to Origen in articulating his own conception; for this is a form in Present Tense, which indicates an action regularly

taking place. In contrast, the expression *καθὼς ηθέλησεν* (as he pleased) is in the Past Tense, which indicates an action which *once* took place in the past; that is, God established this "eternal law"<sup>472</sup> *once* because he *willed* so and there is not any timeless causality compelling him to do so, as we argue in §3 in this chapter.

Therefore, the result of the judgement is a rearrangement of rational beings in the particular ranks of life which constitute the whole world. This will be the rank of life in which a rational creature will live in the æon to come; and at the end of the next æon another consummation will take place and also another judgement and another rearrangement of rational beings in the various ranks of life will follow according to their merits.

In the light of this conception of Origen, it is a serious mistake of R. Sorabji to allege that Origen entertained the hypothesis that only those who need *correction* will be reborn in successive worlds.<sup>473</sup> The main mistake made by many scholars is that they ignore that a fundamental element of Origen's thought is this: It is not the relation God-man that is studied, but the relation God-rational creatures, namely the relation of God to a world comprising many ranks of life<sup>474</sup> and different spaces, separated from each other in terms of in terms of *quality* and not of *geometrical distance*.

Thus the assertion that certain creatures "will not be reborn" does not make any sense at all. In fact, R. Sorabji implicitly attributes a Platonic conception to Origen. This is entirely a mistake. For what Origen holds is that once a rational creature has been created, it will live throughout *all time*, namely it will certainly be present in all the successive worlds in one rank of life or another, according to his merits. If R. Sorabji states "only those who need *correction*" in the sense of "to come into human life again", it is again a mistake. For a formerly human being may need correction and yet not to be reborn in

human rank of life, as it may be found to deserve to be transposed to a lower rank of life.

In fact R. Sorabji's expression is but a Platonic notion (about a soul which assumes a material body only if it is to be punished) attributed to Origen, according to a usual habit of scholars to find it as an easy way-out to render in Platonic or Neoplatonic terms what they take as Origen's thought.<sup>475</sup> Yet Origen's thought is too different from Platonism to be susceptible of being portrayed in Platonic terms which utterly garble what he really held.

At any rate Origen holds that the expected judgement at the end of the present aeon will not be a "final judgement". Hence he speaks of a "second" judgement,<sup>476</sup> implying this which will take place at the end of the next aeon. This is a fundamental conviction of Origen's which can be traced in other points of his writings in Greek. In the *homJer* he refers to "the first resurrection" appealing to Rev.20,6 and he also speaks of "one of the later" resurrections<sup>477</sup> and states; "Who is he who is saved in a later resurrection? It is he who needs to be baptized by fire."<sup>478</sup> In another Homily (namely, the Seventh) on Jeremiah he again implies the same notion; he speaks of "future punishments"<sup>479</sup> and states that there are those for whom it is only one "punishment" that occurs in the "consummation"<sup>480</sup> while others suffer a "second", even a "third", nonetheless a "fourth" and even a seventh one<sup>481</sup> as he holds that the passage in Lev. 26,21 ("I will bring seven times more plagues upon you") "denotes a certain mystery".<sup>482</sup> Indeed his view is that just as they "serve in a sanctuary which is only a copy and shadow of heavenly things"<sup>483</sup> so the people of Israel were punished for their sin as a copy and shadow of the real punishments; so all the punishments which have been written in the law and the prophets actually contain "a shadow of the real punishments".<sup>484</sup>

So a punishment for sins committed in a aeon may occur not only



in the subsequent aeon but also in an aeon after that. This notion is grounded on the scriptural passage Matt. 12,32. Departing from that point, Origen affirms:

"I understand that some are kept by their own sin not only in this aeon but even in the aeon to come; they are those of whom the scripture says 'whosoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven neither in this aeon nor in the aeon to come',<sup>485</sup> and indeed not only in the next aeon but also in the aeons to come.<sup>486</sup> Thus he speaks of "those people whose sins are not forgiven not only in this aeon but also during the whole aeon to come".<sup>487</sup> In *commMatt*, however, Origen states that sin will not be not forgiven in the "aeons to come" indefinitely, but it will be kept only until the aeon to come. He comments on the Psalm 76, 6-8 ("Will the Lord cast off in the aeons?, Μή εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀνώσεται Κύριος;) and says: "Speaking with greater daring, the Lord will not cast off 'in the aeons'; for it is already quite much that he casts off in one aeon; but certainly he will cast off in a second aeon, in the case that the sin is of the kind which 'is not be forgiven neither in this aeon nor in the aeon to come'".<sup>488</sup>

On this point one might notice an evolution in Origen's view of this question, even though his fundamental conception of a prolonged time remains unchanged. Indeed, the above stated comments are from his later works, since the *commMatt* was written in Caesarea at a time between 244 and 248 whereas this section of *commJohn* was written sometime around 231.<sup>489</sup>

In any case, Origen's time is not terminated at the end of the present aeon; so he may speak of an "after" the consummation<sup>490</sup> denoting the continuation of time, after the consummation and the judgement, in the aeon to come.

Thus the term "end" may, in the first place, mean the end of the present aeon,<sup>491</sup> clearly implying that this is not an absolute end of time

itself but just a "moment" in the continuum of time. For each of the consecutive aeons is understood to be a part of the *one* continuum of time. This is why one should speak of "prolongation" of time. Time is continued throughout successive worlds and it constitutes one reality of the world. Recurrence of (non-identical) worlds is understood to occur in this continuum yet although the "worlds" are many, *time is one*. The time of a next aeon is not, as it were, "another" time. It is one and the same continuum which is extended alongside with the consecutive worlds which emerge one after another. Thus an aeon is but a period of time which is understood to consist of these aeons. This is why Origen speaks of "the order of the entirety of aeons " (περί τῆς ἐν ἀνάσσει τοῖς αἰώσι διατάξεως)<sup>492</sup> as well as of "the extension of the whole time (τοῦ διαστήματος τὸν ὅλον χρόνον)"<sup>493</sup> and depicts his conception of time comprising aeons, yet being *one and the same time*, as follows:

"In fact, nothing has been or will be neglected by God, who at each season makes what he should be making in a world of alteration and change. And just as at different seasons of the year a farmer<sup>494</sup> does different agricultural jobs upon the earth and its crops, so God dispenses all the aeons as if they were years, so to speak (οἷον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τινας, ἐν' οὕτως ονομάσω, οἰκονομεῖ ὅλους τοὺς αἰώνας). In each one of them he does what is in itself reasonable for the universe, which is most clearly understood and accomplished by God alone since the truth is known to him."<sup>495</sup>

P. Plass makes the suggestion that Origen holds a notion of "a higher time consisting of aeons".<sup>495</sup> This mistake is relevant to the assertion by the same scholar that Origen holds a notion of a "sacred time", on which we have commented in chapter 1. Subsequently he makes the serious mistake of affirming that beyond time there is a "changeless duration" which is something between God and time. This "duration" is said to be "changeless only while it lasts". All these assertions are

entirely wrong. As we have discussed, in Origen there is the notion of time and that of timelessness in two realities which are clearly distinguished from one another. What Plass has not grasped is the simple fact that Origen's conception of "aeons" depict his conception of prolongation of time -and nothing beyond that.

On the other hand J. Daniélou is another scholar who hardly finds in Origen anything which is not Platonic or Gnostic view. Thus he alleges that "the totality of Time" in Origen's consisted of "the jubilee of aeonian years" and he thinks that in this, too, he has been "anticipated by the Gnostics."<sup>497</sup> We hardly need to comment on this entirely erroneous allegation. We only add that obviously J. Daniélou (although says nothing about that) has misconstrued a passage in *de Or.*<sup>498</sup> where an allegorical assessment of biblical temporal terms is provided.<sup>499</sup>

It is due to this conception of time that scriptural temporal terms like "years" or "days" are quite often interpreted by Origen as signifying "aeons", according to a perception of a prolonged historical process in the continuum of time.<sup>500</sup> This is why Origen so often applies to terms such as "today" or "yesterday" the exegesis that they may be figures which actually indicate "aeons". Thus, the term "today" may mean the present aeon, whereas the term "yesterday" may mean the past aeon.<sup>501</sup>

Thus Origen holds that in the consecutive aeons *time* is the same. This is an important element of his thought, especially because there are assertions that neither the Pythagoreans nor the Stoics had made an explicit part of their theory that *time* will be the same throughout successive aeons.<sup>502</sup> Indeed, taking into account the Greek idea of the Great Year, for example, it would be argued that, once this period comes round and the heavenly bodies return to their original alignments, then time comes to an end and starts again.

However there is a point which has to be made in contrast to R. Sorabji's assertions: This argument is sound only if time is regarded as

a *measure* or *number*, namely in an Aristotelian sense. If time is regarded as essentially being an *extension*, this argument is not sound any more. If time is but the number counting the years of a cosmic period then certainly it will reach the number of years which comprise a cosmic period and then the counting will have to *begin* again, namely *another time* should begin. But if time in its *essence* is regarded as an *extension*, there is nothing to suggest that it will *begin* again. This extension is simply infinite -as the Stoics explicated. We think that this is a reason why the Stoics do not seem to have dealt with this question. They simply did not need to do so.

Much discussion has been made about "cyclicity" in speaking of either "time" or "events".<sup>503</sup> It has been quite popular among scholars to speak about "cyclic" time and "rectilinear" time -the former regarded as a "Greek" conception of time. This notion of "cyclicity" enjoys much currency and use, perhaps because it provides a simplistic spatial figure of time. We, however, regard it as most misleading for a proper comprehension of the problematique of time proper.

Even in Heraclitus or in the Stoic thought, one could not speak of "cyclic" events. At most he would speak about "periodical" events, which *re-cur* in normal periods of an infinite, linear, continuum of time. As for Plato, hints of "cyclicity"<sup>504</sup> have their counter points. As an example we adduce this: In the *State*,<sup>505</sup> Plato seems to suggest that some day, in the infinite future, the ideal State which he portrayed will materialize. It would be very reasonable to assert that the portrayal of an occurrence lying in the infinite future implies a linear conception of time.

There is only one *hypothetical* case, in which one might speak of "cyclical" time proper. That is an eclectic attitude, according to which the essence of time is to be a *number* (in an Aristotelian sense) and *also* to hold the Stoic notion of successive periods of identical worlds. In that case, time had to start again, by virtue of the fact that the number

will reach the amount of the years comprising the cosmic period and it will not be possible to increase further, but it will have to start again, just because Aristotelian time is infinite without any absolute beginning or end and therefore there is no *absolute* beginning of counting the *number* which is time. It is only in such a hypothetical case that one would speak of "cyclical" time, namely an infinite series of counting until a certain number and then starting counting again from the beginning. But such an eclectic view of time, if ever any, never prevailed in the Greek thought.

Thus the very notion of *repetition* of events exactly implies a *distinction* of events even if they are *structurally* identical from one cosmic period to another. Hence the notion of "cyclicity" alleged as a universal "Greek" conception of time is absurd. As for Aristotle, he speaks of time as "something like as cycle".<sup>506</sup> It was a notorious mistake to take this phrase out of its context and allege that Aristotle suggested that time is "cyclical", a mistake which clearly indicated that the text of the *Physics* had not been read -anyway a mistake which we do not think is made by scholars nowadays.<sup>507</sup>

In the best case, if one wishes to stick to this notion of "cyclicity" (albeit there is no reason for this at all)<sup>508</sup> one would speak of a *spiral* of space-time.

Thus it is due to the very conception of time as an *extension* that the Stoics did not explicate their view that *time* is the same throughout the successive aeons, although they did emphasize that time is a continuum which is not broken during the destruction of a world whatsoever. This point supports our argument that the Stoic view of time is different from that of Aristotle's. At any rate, nevertheless, Origen did enunciate his view that *time* is one and the same and "aeons" are but parts of this *one* time.

It is remarkable that O. Cullmann also holds a notion of successive

aeons in what many people wish to regard as a Biblical view of time. He holds that the infinite time is divided into three periods which are also called "aeons" according to scriptural terminology and discerns a "past aeon", which is the time before the creation.<sup>509</sup> Thus there is the "present aeon", which is the time from the creation onwards; and finally there is a third aeon, which is the "aeon to come".<sup>510</sup> The first aeon is beginningless and was terminated when creation was made. The present aeon had a beginning and will have an end which will mark the beginning of the endless aeon to come. In any case Cullmann is not absolutely positive as to how many aeons are indicated through the language of the New Testament. So, in order to feel more sure about his assertions he speaks of "three aeons *at least*".<sup>511</sup>

Origen has serious cause to employ the notion of prolongation of time (discussed also in the conclusion of this chapter). On the contrary, Cullmann does not say why (what claims to be biblical) time should be regarded as consisting of aeons. He just appeals to biblical passages where he finds the term "aeon" or "aeons". Yet his assertion that the passage in Revelation 10,6 ("there should be time no longer") does not mean that time itself will be terminated but is just means "there will be no more delay"<sup>512</sup> is but an extrapolation. Accordingly, that time did exist before creation is also an extrapolation, as it is directly grounded to the arbitrary assertion that time is not a creature made by God.<sup>513</sup>

Thus, according to Cullmann, God is regarded as being // time and this time is what creation (once came into existence) is //, too. What should be pointed out here is this: In an era when there is little doubt that time in itself is inseparably connected to space, so that there is *one* reality of space-time which is actually regarded, Cullmann affirms that time in itself, namely time regarded "in its essence ... is not connected with the creation" and time "in its essence" is not something which "first appeared with the creation" as a "fallen down" state.<sup>514</sup> All

these are postulated because of "the danger" of a "Platonic conception", namely the danger to regard that divine being is "timeless".<sup>515</sup> Indeed Cullmann is haunted by what he regards as "danger" in Greek thought. We shall return to this point at the end of chapter 3 in order to discuss whether or not Cullmann actually avoids this "danger" and if it is due to this obsession that he succumbs to an essentially Greek way of thinking as well as into a Greek conception of essential characteristics of time.

In contrast to such a conception, Origen affirms the close and inseparable connexion of time to space and he depicts this connexion through a highly sophisticated terminology. It is due to this perception that in order to speak of "prolongation of time" it has been necessary to speak of the notion of successive worlds. It is absolutely impossible to speak of a prolonged time without speaking of the world connected with it. It is rather *through* speaking of the successive worlds in time that the notion of prolongation could be properly understood. If one alleges that it is possible to speak of prolongation of time without also speaking of the world connected with it, it is as if he regarded it possible to separate the *one* reality of space-time and to speak of time while neglecting space. This is why we should like to point out what is actually meant when one refers to the "shape" of time, so that some speak of "cyclical" time and others of "rectilinear" time or other affirmations about the "shape" of time.

When a certain kind of line is drawn in order to portray time, this line does not actually portray time but it indicates *space in time*. In fact, each point of the line is but a certain position of *the world in time*; so the consecutive points which (conceptually) comprise this line, is a geometrical scheme which actually portray the world its consecutive positions into the continuum of time. Using Origen's highly sophisticated terminology, we can say this: The "shape" of time is but the conceptual succession of the "structure of the world" (namely of

space) in its consecutive positions of motion *in* time. So prolonged time and its meaning is studied through a simultaneous study of the positions of the "structure of the world" in time. *Time* in itself cannot be drawn whatsoever. It is only *space* which can be portrayed through some kind of picture. It is through the movement of the world in time, through the perception of the unstoppable succession of positions in time that the *flux of time* is perceived and portrayed in a geometrical figure. Yet this figure actually portrays consecutive moments of the *world* (namely, space-time) -it does not portray time itself.

Thus it is only through the notion of the inseparable connexion of space to time that such a geometrical figure can make sense as a portrayal of time, *too*. This is why Cullmann actually contradicts himself when he depicts time as a line. For once he does not accept the inseparable connexion of time proper to space, there is no logical argument for him to ground the view that this line portrays *time*.

It is due to Origen's fundamental perception of space-time as an inseparable reality that, in this section, the topic of prolongation of time has been discussed through his notion of successive worlds. For what the succession of worlds actually indicates is the flux of a prolonged time. One might assert that, in the previous analyses, the category of "time" would be substituted by a term such as "history".<sup>516</sup> We shall not object to that. Yet what is "history" really? Is not it a category which intrinsically entails spatio-temporal implications? Is not "history" just the perception of the status of the world's existence moment-after-moment in the flux of time? Hence, does not history itself imply the kind of time itself, in the final analysis? In fact, "history" is but an observation and portrayal of the flux of the world in time. History is par excellence the notion which indicates the fact that space and time in fact constitute *one* reality.

This is exactly what has eluded Aristotle as well as the Stoics



(not to mention Epicureans and Sceptics) when they argued against the full reality of time proper. He regarded the present as extensionless, the past as not existing any more and the future as not existing yet. Thus there is nothing of time actually *existing*. The argumentation of Aristotle (as well as the Zeno's paradoxes) puzzled philosophers for a long time thereafter. At the time of the closure of the Neoplatonic school in Athens, in 529 A.D., its head Damascius was still working on them -and these philosophers (Damascius, Simplicius, etc.) continued their studies even after the closure of the school.

These arguments, however, are bound to be unresolved unless space-time is faced as *one* reality. The Stoic quite erroneously regarded as *real* what is *present*, namely what exists *now*. Accordingly, to Aristotle *now* does not actually exist, but it is only a *potential* reality which exists only once a point in a line is singled out -otherwise it does not exist; (this is one of the notions through which Aristotle tried to tackle with Zeno's paradoxes).

Hence, according to the assertion that *real* is only what is *present* it would be argued that the reality of the battle of Thermopylae should be challenged because it is not a fact *present*. This kind of argument certainly would go too far. For what Aristotle did not do in treating time in the *Physics* is to consider time *inseparably* from space. In the final analysis his fundamental conception of time proper was an imagery of a line -and so it has been treated for a long time.

Quite rightly, however, in late nineteenth century, H. Bergson asserted that if we try to conceive time as a static geometrical line, we are really thinking of *space*.<sup>517</sup> In fact Aristotle was reflecting on time purely in terms of space. The Stoics, too, regarded as real (ὄν) only what *actually* exists and what *potentially* exists. To "walk" actually (that is, at this very moment) is a different (namely "fuller") kind of reality from the possibility to walk, namely to be able to walk at any

future moment or to have already walked. But the outstanding difference lies in the Stoic view of time as an "extension".

The natural objectivity of time as an element of the make-up of the world (and not merely as a "number" of motion) although established by the Stoics, was not exploited by them at all. This view comes to the fore only with Origen. It was only with Origen that time is regarded *both* as an element of the creation existing in itself and yet closely connected to space so that no account of time may be given apart from the notion of space whatsoever. Origen did not treat space *instead of* time, namely spatializing time. But he did treat space together *with* time. This is why the notion of *with* is outstandingly present in the term  $\sigma\upsilon\nu\nu\alpha\rho\epsilon\kappa\tau\epsilon\lambda\iota\upsilon\omega\nu$ . This is the fundamental and crucial element which, in the sharp end, is absent from many ancient accounts of time and it is only on this misleading grounds that his deductive arguments about the reality of time would stand.

In Origen's view, time is a *natural* dimension of the world along side which the world exists. There is no question of ontological classification between *time* and *motion* - a question which has been given so much discussion until our day.<sup>518</sup>

Origen's world is always *in motion*, so to pose hypothetical questions of a possible "time without change"<sup>519</sup> is a meaningless scholasticism in which (due to the purposes of his theology) he was not interested whatsoever. For in Origen motion has a crucial and definite purpose and space-time exists as long as motion is necessary. Time is regarded as objectively existing in itself as a dimension of the world. But there is no reason to pose the pointless question of a possible nonexistence of motion. For motion not only is a concrete *datum* of the real world but it also is *necessary* for the of space-time towards a final goal. Once God is regarded as omnipotens, time as a creature the nature of which is to be an "extension" and "dimension" of the world. At

any rate Origen had no reason not face the problem whether time *cannot* exist without motion, because time proper is a reality closely related but non-dependent on space, albeit co-existing with space. Once God is the creator of time, there is no reason not to assume that time without motion *could not* exist. But the actual point in Origen's conception of space-time with respect to God is that without motion time *need not* exist at all. For, as we shall discuss in the ensuing chapters, the very existence of time proper has a crucial intrinsic meaning, character and purpose, namely a *raison d' être*. To try to reflect on a "time without change", or time without motion, constitutes an intellectual exercise which Origen did not need at all. To him it would simply be a meaningless question entirely out of the purposes of his theology, let alone that "motion" is a permanent characteristic of his "world", as we shall see in the next section. Through the elaboration on the conception of time as essentially being an *extension*, the reality of time is clearly affirmed and so is its close connexion to space and, subsequently, to motion.

This is why it is mainly in terms of observation of the movement of the world that the notion of prolongation of time has been discussed in this section.

A point which should be elucidated, however, is whether, in Origen's thought, *prolongation* is a category which simply indicates the course *in* time or it has further implications which eventually come to pertain to time itself. An account on this question will be given at the end of this chapter. For the same question will be raised with respect to the notion of *causality*, which we are going to discuss next.

### §3. Time and Causality

**The kinds of motion.** In spite of the fact that Origen is mainly interested in the rational beings of the particular spaces of the world,

rather than the spaces themselves, he does not fail to refer to motion in general. In this section we shall discuss how he considers motion and particularly the *causes* of it.

Treatment of this question is supplied by Greek extracts of *Princ* as well as in *deOr*. A study of these points can show that Origen deals with the classification of motion in quite a systematic way. As we shall argue later in this chapter, the points where those analyses appear could in no way be considered as incidental. For in the *Princ* it is "since the teaching of the church includes the doctrine of the righteous judgement of God" that Origen makes the analysis of "motion", in the beginning of Book III, Chapter 1, namely when he begins to extend his view of free will.<sup>520</sup> It should be emphasized that the criterion according to which Origen makes the classification of motion, is the *cause* of it. This crucial point has eluded J. Oulton and H. Chadwick.<sup>521</sup> Thus Origen discerns motion in the following categories, according to the cause of it.

1. Motion which is caused from without,<sup>522</sup> this is the motion of inanimate things, like "stones and pieces of wood, which are cut out of the quarry or have lost the power of growing", that is to say things which "are held together merely by their form".<sup>523</sup> In the same category are also included those called "portable things"<sup>524</sup> in general; that is, not the inanimate things as above, but also living things like "the bodies of living creatures as well as portable plants".<sup>525</sup> What is in common in these motions is that all of them have their *cause* "outside" (ἐξωθεν)<sup>526</sup> them.

2. Motion due to "the flux of bodies" (τὴν φύσιν τῶν σωμάτων). Origen states that he does not include this kind "in the present discussion", namely in *Princ*.<sup>527</sup> However, he refers to that in *deOr* stating that this motion applies to things which "are moved by virtue of the fact that all bodies are in a state of flux as they decay"; therefore "this motion which they have is inseparably connected with their state

of decay.<sup>528</sup>

3. Motion in which the cause exists in the moving body; they are those moved "either by their own inherent nature or soul".<sup>529</sup> These are things having the cause of motion "in themselves" (ἐν αὐτοῖς).<sup>530</sup> This kind of motion applies both to inanimate things and living creatures. Thus the following categories may be discerned in this case.

a. Motion of "metals, and fire and even springs of water" where it can be said that they "have the cause of their motion in themselves" (ἐν αὐτοῖς δέ ἔχειν τὴν αἰτίαν τοῦ κινεῖσθαι),<sup>531</sup> as Origen states, "they have the cause of their motion" "with themselves" (ἐξ αὐτῶν).<sup>532</sup>

b. Motion of "animates"<sup>533</sup> or "living creatures",<sup>534</sup> this is called motion "from within themselves" (ἀφ' αὐτῶν).<sup>535</sup> These "living creatures" move "from within themselves when there arises within them an image (φαντασία) which calls forth an impulse"; it is because of "the imaginative nature setting the impulse in ordered motion". Thus Origen regards it as a kind of "natural" motion, which is connected with the nature of a certain animal; for instance, "in the spider, an image of weaving a web arises and the impulse to weave it follows"; this "impulse to weave" is connected to this animal because this is the natural manner of its existence; the same happens with the "bee" in which, too, "an impulse to produce a honey-comb" arises. Origen's conviction, nevertheless, is that animals "beyond this imaginative nature ... possess nothing else".<sup>536</sup>

c. Motion of rational creatures. This is different from the motion of any other living creature. For the "rational animal ... has something more than the imaginative nature, namely reason which judges the impulses; some it rejects, others it approves of, so that the creature may be guided in accordance with these latter images."<sup>537</sup> This is why Origen regards the motion of rational creatures as motion "by themselves" (δι' αὐτῶν).<sup>538</sup> Thus "to decide to use what has happened

either in this way or in that is the work of nothing else but the reason within us, which, as the alternatives appear, either influences us towards the impulses that incite to what is good and seemly or else turns us aside to the reverse".<sup>539</sup> So his view is that the possibilities of contemplating good and evil are inherent in the nature of reason; it is out of following these contemplations and choosing freely whatever he wishes to choose that a rational creature is subject either to praise for choosing the good or to blame for choosing the evil.

It is Origen's view that external things do not lie within our power; but to use them in this way or the other, since we have received reason as a judge and investigator of the way in which we ought to deal with each of them, that is our task.<sup>540</sup> It is out of these considerations of motion, that the notion of Judgement makes sense in Origen's thought. For what he mainly considers is motion stemming from the freedom of rational creatures and because of that no rational creature can escape personal responsibility. Thus he concludes as follows:

"To throw the blame for what so happens to us on external things and to free ourselves from censure, is like declaring that we are like stocks and stones, which are dragged along by agents that move them from without, is neither true nor reasonable, but is the argument of a man who desires to contradict the idea of free will."<sup>541</sup>

**Free moral action as motion.** If time is of importance in Origen's world, it is so because time is the "extension" where this "motion" takes place. For time, although fundamentally regarded as a natural element of the whole constitution of creation, is also regarded as the "extension" where the will of God and the will of rational creatures encounter each other. On the one hand it is the unchangeable will of God which is manifested in certain times; and on the other, it is the will of creatures which comes to a dialectical relation to the will of God, as they act by "motion" perceived as free moral action.

We see, therefore, that Origen holds a "vertically" broader conception of the world (in the sense that there are ranks of life above and under the human one); he also holds a "horizontally" broader conception of time (in the sense that time is extended before as well as after this aeon). Accordingly, he holds a broader conception of "motion" considering this mainly as free moral action taking place in this broader space-time. Origen is not unaware that there are also other kinds of motion, as discussed in the previous pages; yet he is not interested in them in the same way that he is not interested in the natural environment of the particular spaces comprising the world. Accordingly, although he knows that time is a natural reality, he considers mainly the theological and not the natural implications of this reality. This is why he deems that it is only this "motion" (namely, free moral action) on which both "horizontal" as well as "vertical" arrangement of space-time is dependent. For the continuum of time is arranged in consecutive aeons which have a duration directly related to free moral action, as we saw in the previous section. It is only this kind of motion that is taken into account at the time of judgement. Therefore this is the only kind of motion which not only determines the duration of an aeon, but also the arrangement of the next world (that is, the "vertical" arrangement of space-time).

This is why Origen does not confine his conception of time to the limits of the Stoic thought. He originally employs, to a certain extent, a Stoic terminology, yet the actual content he attributes to the terms is quite different. "Motion" does not so much apply to the "natural" one, rather pertains mainly to free moral action of rational creatures.

Origen does certainly not ignore the connexion between time and heavenly bodies; he knows that time exists as long as heavenly bodies exist and vice versa.<sup>542</sup> This is the meaning of the term *συνσχεκτείνόμενος* which he introduced on the subject; yet he nowhere

asserts that time exists *out* of the movement of heavenly bodies; time co-exists with them yet being an independent element, as it were, related to the "structure of this world". Nevertheless time is connected with motion, the term "motion" meaning free moral action; for time is the means where this action can be realized. So *time should* exist because there is a motion to take place; it seems though that Origen perceived this question in a reverse manner as well: *Motion should* exist since there is the extension of time for this to take place.

We have already seen the criticism that Plotinus directed against the Stoics for their defining time in relation to motion; his argument was that the Stoics would actually be unable to say anything about time if there is no motion at all.<sup>543</sup> Origen had no reason to deal with such a question; yet he provides a certain personal opinion about it, without naming the problem at all. His view is that "motion" is an always active faculty of rational creatures; and by "motion" he here means free moral action only. It is in this context that the following passage from the *Princ* should be understood:

"...no movement can take place in any body which does not possess life, nor can living beings exist at any time without movement."<sup>544</sup> It is obvious that Origen here does not refer to any kind of movement; for it is himself who has extended his views about the various kinds of it. He therefore refers to free moral action; and he accordingly states that "...the holy angels and other heavenly powers ... are capable of feeling and of movement"; for "what" "is there in them" is "rational feeling and movement".<sup>545</sup> Also, "It is certain that no living creature can be altogether inactive and immovable, but it is eager for every kind of movement and for continual action and volition; and it is clear, I think, that this nature resides in all living beings. Much more then must a rational being such as man be always engaged in some movement or activity."<sup>546</sup> And again it is stated that "...the will's freedom always



moves in the direction either of good or evil, nor can the rational sense, that is the mind or soul, ever exist without some movement either good or evil."<sup>547</sup>

Given the particular meaning which Origen attributes to "movement" (namely, free moral action in all the ranks of life) he, without naming the question of time at all, here provides an answer to any potential objection against his conception of time like that of Plotinus' against the Stoic definition of time. What does Origen actually mean when he makes those affirmations? Taking into account that here "movement" means "free moral action", it is moral inactivity as well as moral neutrality of any action that actually Origen denies. In fact, this view can be corroborated by his works in Greek. In *comm/John* he states:

"... it is clear that every man, endowed with reason, is either a son of God or a son of the devil; in other words, he commits sin or he does not commit sin, as there is nothing between committing sin and not committing sin (ουθενός ὄντος μεταξύ τοῦ ποιεῖν τήν ἀμαρτίαν καί τήν ἀμαρτίαν μὴ ποιεῖν); and if he commits sin, he comes from the devil; while if he does not commit sin he has been begotten by God."<sup>548</sup>

On this point Origen stands outside the Stoic tradition; for the Stoics held that actions are distinguished into three categories, namely the "good deeds" (κατορθώματα) the "sins" (ἀμαρτήματα) and the "neuters" (ουδέτερα).<sup>549</sup> Origen knew the Stoic notion of "indifferents" (ἀδιάφορα) and refers to that in *Cels*.<sup>550</sup> He also uses the term κατορθώματα himself.<sup>551</sup> There is one case though where he uses the term "indifferent life, which is neither good nor bad; a sense in which the impious and animals are said to live".<sup>552</sup> In fact this notion, namely that "to live" in itself is morally "indifferent" is a Stoic view.<sup>553</sup>

It is thus that Origen implicitly considers the criticism of Neoplatonists against the original Stoic definition of time which defined time as an extension of motion. As everything apart from God is in time

there must be a kind of motion justifying, as it were, the existence of time in all the ranks of life. This is the perpetual free moral action and this is why of all the kinds of motion classified by Origen, it is this one which is of major significance and attention is his entire thought.

**Trial of motion in time.** Just as the Stoic term of "motion" is mainly attributed the meaning discussed above, so the term "extension" has not so much the "natural" meaning which it has in Stoic thought, but means mainly the "extension" where trial of free moral action takes place.

In *hom.1er* Origen states: " He says 'since out youth until today [we committed sin] and we did not obey the voice of Lord our God'; [he says] we committed sin until the present time. Then, once they return they say 'we committed sin and we did not obey' as a beginning of return. For we did not obey right as soon as we want to obey; for still there is need of time; like wounds need time in order to be healed, so of the return [time is needed] in order to return to God completely and clearly."<sup>554</sup>

The use of terms such as " returned (ἐπιστρέψαντες)", " beginning (ἀρχήν)", "for still there is need of time (καί γάρ ἐτι χρόνου δεῖ)", "for the return (τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς)" indicates that, in Origen's view, time is not simply an "extension", but it is the "extension" for free moral action to take place.

Yet it is a ground for trial; and this trial is actually a challenge to freedom; the outcome of this trial is the manner in which freedom reacts to devil's acts who also acts within time, as Origen states:

"The devil has been committing sins for so long a time (τοσοῦτω χρόνῳ), since the creation and the καταβολή of the world, yet he suffers neither fire nor whip; for he does not merit those punishments which come from God."<sup>555</sup>

It is time itself which, being the field of this trial, finally shows what the result is. In *se/Ex* Origen comments on Ex.31,1 ("And the Lord

spake unto Moses saying") as follows:

"It was a good forty days that the most wise God kept Moses waiting before giving him the law, although it was possible for him to give the Law in three days. But [he did so] that the time of Moses' absence tries the impiety which was hidden in the depth of the Jews' hearts".<sup>556</sup>

Thus time constitutes the venue where free moral action is exposed to trial. It is the length of time which often tests the validity of a certain moral attitude. In Origen's view, duration, length of time, constitutes a major challenge to moral action.

But although length of time is a means for trying moral quality of action, it does not in itself constitute an element of the essence of morality. It is not the length of time, in which a man is aware of the word of God that is of the main significance; what is important is the moral action itself throughout time. It is in the light of this view that Origen interprets the passage Matt.19,30 ("many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first."). What he comments on this passage is that those who accept the divine speech later than others "are not hindered by time" (ὡς οὐκ ἐμποδίζοντος τοῦ χρόνου τοῖς ὕστερον πιστεύουσιν)<sup>557</sup> meaning that the question is not how long one is a faithful but how he realizes Christian belief in action. He particularly insists on this point dealing with it extensively. He also appeals to Heb.5,12 ("For when because of the time (διὰ τὸν χρόνον) you ought to be teachers"),<sup>558</sup> averring that the duration of just knowing the divine law is not a sufficient presupposition to be "first". For what is of prime significance is the duration of action accomplishing this teaching as a concrete action in time. This is why, in *commMatt*, Origen states:

"And it is possible to those who want to extend their force and energy intensively on the work for less time within the vineyard to have carried out an equal work to that of those who began working since

dawn; for they did not get tired as like those who began working since dawn."<sup>559</sup>

In the *enarr-Job* he refers to the passage Job,2,9 ("After time enough had passed his wife said unto him") and comments: "See how malicious he is. When much time had gone by, it is then that he attacks; for it is then that power is most weakened. Weakness was due both, to the fact that he who suffered had become more weak because of the length of time and that his hope was more near to fading".<sup>560</sup> And further: "He was bent neither by the loss of money neither nor by the untimely death of his sons nor by the unspeakable torture of his body nor by so long a length of time."<sup>561</sup>

This is the point of view, from which time is considered as the extension for the trial of free moral action of rational creatures. Time exists as an indispensable means of realizing freedom, being also where the divine *oikonomia* is manifested.

As it happens with the terms "motion" and "extension" it should be expected that where the Stoics consider time also as a "measure of fastness and slowness"<sup>562</sup> in a purely natural sense, Origen would attribute to this term a quite different content according to his overall conception of time and motion; and indeed this is what he does.

**The notions of "fastness" and "slowness".** In the context of conceiving time as a dimension of life, where a dialectical relation between creatures and God takes place, Origen regards time as being also a "measure and criterion of both fastness and slowness" as the Stoics used to define it generally in addition to their fundamental view of time as an "extension of motion".<sup>563</sup> Again we see that Origen formally considers time in this Stoic way (which at this particular point is Aristotelian, too), yet in substance he endows this notion with a totally different content; it is not a natural content, but a moral one. In *enarr-Job* he comments: "And if someone might ask why the friends were

so late ... One should know that the postponement of arrival was some divine *oikonomia* ... some divine *oikonomia* took place for the friends to be late and the disease to be prolonged; so that the just man will be exercised for more time and will more justifiably be raised up by God".<sup>564</sup>

Accordingly, in the *Princ* it is stated: "...sometimes it does not turn out to the advantage of those who are healed that they should be healed quickly (τάχλιον), if, that is they have fallen of themselves into difficulties and are then easily released from the conditions into which they have fallen; for despising the evil as being easy of cure and taking no precautions against falling into it they will find themselves in it a second time. In dealing with such persons therefore the eternal God, the perceiver of secret things, who 'knows all things before they come to be',<sup>565</sup> in his goodness refrains from sending them the quicker help (υπερτίθεται τὴν ταχύτεραν πρὸς αὐτοὺς βοήθειαν) and, if I may say so, helps them by not helping them ... lest having quickly (τάχλιον) turned and been healed by obtaining forgiveness they should despise the wounds of their wickedness as being slight and easy of cure and should very quickly (τάχλιον) fall into it again. Perhaps, too, though they had paid the penalty for their former sins which they committed against virtue when they abandoned it, they had not yet fulfilled the appropriate time (οὐδένω τὸν πρέποντα χρόνον ἐκπεπληρώκεσαν) ... and then afterwards (ὕστερον) to be called to a more enduring repentance, such as would prevent them from quickly (ταχέως) falling again into the sins into which they had previously fallen ..."; for "God is sometimes long and slow (μέλλει καὶ βραδύνει) in doing good to men ...".<sup>566</sup> At another point Origen explains the way in which God's "*oikonomia*" is manifested towards men. This text is again full of temporal categories indicating the "faster" (τάχλιον) or "slower" (βράδιον) or "not faster" (μὴ τάχλιον) or "after a long time" (ὕστερον πολλῷ χρόνῳ) that this "*oikonomia*" is manifested.<sup>567</sup>

In *commMatt* Origen points up that forgiveness of sins comes "either slower or faster"<sup>568</sup> and at another point of the same work he states that "forgiveness of sins reaches things and to those who committed the sins this forgiveness is bestowed according to justice, either this forgiveness comes later (ἑσπέρῳ) or sooner (τόχρῳ)"<sup>569</sup>

What we see therefore is that free moral action is not only within time, but it also is in a sense judged according to time. Thus time is a "criterion" of "both fastness and slowness",<sup>570</sup> but in Origen's view it is not so much regarded as measuring fastness or slowness themselves, but as a means for appreciating moral action. Therefore Origen's time is in principle an "extension" for moral action to be tried and it is considered as a "measure and criterion" not so much measuring *quantity* (of time) but measuring *quality* (of free moral action). Time is the "extension" where freedom is tried; for it is only within time that creature's freedom can make sense.

Thus, divine "oikonomia" is manifested in time; God himself acts "quickly or slowly" as he realizes his "oikonomia". Yet Origen adheres to his view of God's timelessness stating that although rational beings need time in order to realize their freedom, God does not actually need time in order to manifest his "oikonomia". With respect to this he states in *commMatt*:

"...and no one should have any hesitation in accepting the saying that it is at once (εὐθέως) that he, who sold all his belongings and gave to the poor, becomes perfect. If the belongings are given over much time and much time is needed to give them to the above-mentioned poor, the Logos is by no means hindered by time in order give (in proportion to the things given to the poor) so that he who acted in such a manner become perfect. And it is clear that he who carried out these deeds will have a treasure in the heavens, becoming heavenly himself."<sup>571</sup>

So the Logos is in the world acting "quickly" or "slowly", yet his

action is not actually subject to the confinements that time itself of necessity imposes on temporal rational creatures. So it is in a way of his own that Origen conceives the presence of the Logos in time. God, even in his temporal presence as Logos, dominates time due to his being transcendent to time and creator of it.

There is therefore a further fundamental difference between Origen and the Stoics. The latter held that "all beings are in time"<sup>572</sup> and so was their god, due to his being immanent in the world. The god of the Stoics is bound, as it were, with time. In Origen's view "all beings are in time" means, as we have seen, that all *created* beings are in time. It is the notion of transcendence of God vis-à-vis the world that allows him to consider the relation of Logos to time in the way we discussed above. To Origen beings are "in" time<sup>573</sup> or "under" time,<sup>574</sup> yet it is his clear conception of time as created by God and it is also his conception of the world in a sense broader than the visible firmament, that allows him to regard time in a more flexible way. For he goes as far as to affirm a notion of relativity in the conception of time.

Hence Origen is interested neither in the motion of inanimate objects nor in that of animals caused just by impulses. Besides he deems the movement of heavenly bodies as "vanity".<sup>575</sup> At any rate it is not nature itself which he is preoccupied with. Nature is but a "supplement"<sup>576</sup> forming the surroundings of moral action -which is the crucial matter. He makes it perfectly clear that there is only one kind of motion which is of interest to him, namely that of rational creatures, that is to say, the kind of motion which is characterized by the correlated categories of personal freedom and responsibility.

When therefore Origen speaks of time as a means "through which the whole returns to" God<sup>577</sup> and when he avers that this "through" has a meaning of "serving to"<sup>578</sup> it is obvious that he regards time as something more than an *extension* and merely natural (that is, morally

indifferent) *dimension* of life; but, in addition, he regards time as the extension "serving" to the realization of free moral action. This is the kind of "motion" mainly related to Origen's time. For it is *freedom* that this extension primarily pertains to.

**God and creaturely freedom.** The perception shows that each individual rational creature follows a personal direction which is determined by its own free action. In this course God is regarded as totally impartial. It is quite significant that Origen's conviction on this question is so strong that he speaks of "the principle of impartiality" of God. What is suggested by that is that God by no means interferes with the freedom of rational beings. It is in the light of this conception that the following passage from the *Princ* should be understood:

"...All these, down to the very least, God supervises by the power of his wisdom and distinguishes by the controlling hand of his judgement; and thus he has arranged the universe on the principle of the most impartial retribution (*aequissima retributione universa disposuit*), according as each one deserves for his merit to be assisted or cared for. Herein is displayed in its completeness the principle of impartiality, when the inequality of circumstances preserves an equality of reward (*aequitatis*) for merit. But the grounds of merit in each individual are known with truth and clearness only to God, together with his only-begotten Word and Wisdom and his Holy Spirit."<sup>579</sup>

This kind of relation of God to temporal free action of rational creatures is a fundamental conviction of Origen, which can be identified in other points of his work as well: "...so also must we understand in regard to the divine providence, that he treats all who descend into the struggles of human life with the most impartial care..."<sup>580</sup> and further; "... that all will take part in the struggle, but individuals will either be matched against individuals or at any rate will fight in such a way as shall be approved by God, who is the just president of this contest."<sup>581</sup>



As regards the function of angels in relation to men it is portrayed thus:

"Certainly we must suppose that all these duties are not performed by accident or chance, nor because the angels were naturally created for them, lest in so doing we should charge the Creator with partiality. Rather must we believe that they were conferred in accordance with merit and virtue and with the activity and ability of each individual spirit, by God who is the most righteous and impartial governor of all things."<sup>582</sup> Hence "God does not offer possibilities to some beings so that they commit sins nor does he offer possibilities to others so that they carry out good deeds."<sup>583</sup>

His conviction is that God's foreknowledge in no way affects the freedom of rational beings,<sup>584</sup> for, "although it may seem strange" occurrences happen "not because they are foreknown, but they have been foreknown just because they were going to happen."<sup>585</sup> Accordingly in *se/Ez* it is stated: "So it is upon our choice both to hear and not to hear as if God had no foreknowledge at all; and our freedom of will is neither less if God has foreknowledge nor more if God has no foreknowledge."<sup>586</sup> This subject also is one of those given particular emphasis in *Ce/s*:

"Celsus thinks that if something has been predicted by some sort of foreknowledge, then it takes place because it was predicted. But we do not grant this. We say that the man who made the prediction was not the cause of the future event, because he foretold that it would happen; but we hold that the future event, which would have taken place even if it had not been prophesied, constitutes the cause of its prediction by the one with foreknowledge. And all this is present in the foreknowledge of the prophet; if it is possible for a particular event to happen and possible for it not to happen, either of these alternatives may come to pass. We do not maintain that the one who has foreknowledge takes away the possibility of an event happening or not happening,<sup>587</sup> saying something of this sort: This will assuredly happen, and it is impossible

for it to turn out otherwise. This holds good for all knowledge about matters controlled by free will, whether we are dealing with the divine scriptures or with Greek stories. And in fact what is called by logicians an idle argument, which is a sophism, would not even be regarded as fallacious by Celsus (so mean is his ability), although by the standards of sound logic it is a sophism.<sup>588</sup>

In the *commGen* the same argument is adduced; "by no means is he who has foreknowledge the cause of what has been foreknown"<sup>589</sup> and "the foreknowledge of God does not impose any necessity upon those which have been foreseen".<sup>590</sup>

In fact Origen has a clear perception of what constitutes God's *action* (τὰ γινόμενα) in the world.<sup>591</sup> Thus he arranges divine action in three categories, namely "out of will" (κατὰ βούλησιν) "out of benevolence" (κατ' εὐδοκίαν) "out of forgiving" (κατὰ συγχώρησιν). These are the three ways in which God *acts* in history. Obviously all the three of them are related to divine *will*. The first category ("out of will") just alludes to God's action into the world not "in response" but, as it were, by his own initiative.

By contrast to divine action Origen distinguishes divine "foreknowledge" (πρόγνωσιν) which is understood not to be *action*. The way in which he articulates this distinction is that divine "foreknowledge" (πρόγνωσιν) should be understood as related to divine "will" (βούλησιν). Thus the category of "foreknowledge" is not related to any of the three categories of divine action. Indeed Origen makes the distinction between "will" and "foreknowledge" of God more than once in his work.<sup>592</sup>

It is, therefore, obvious that Origen, throughout his entire theology, maintains his view of the freedom of rational creatures insisting that God's foreknowledge by no means introduces any limits to this freedom.

**The conception of causality.** Nevertheless in Origen's conception of time there is a notion of causality. Let us then see how he perceives that.

First, Origen does not deny that there is a causality in the succession of human actions. Indeed, in the *commentary* it is asserted that foreknowledge by God is due to the knowledge of succession and evolution of actions according to a causality:

"In the beginning of creation God has established the principle that nothing should happen without a cause; so, by his mind he goes along what is going to happen, seeing that it is because this one happened, it is that one which follows; and if this subsequently takes place, that one follows; and once this happens, that one will take place; and it is in this way that God has advanced until the end of things, he knows what will happen in the future, yet by no means being himself a cause of everything that will happen. It is like knowing beforehand that someone who, because of his ignorance dashes recklessly on a slippery road, will slip down; yet he who knows it beforehand is not the cause of slipping down."<sup>593</sup>

**Natural causality.** Thus Origen admits that there is a "natural" causality and he also admits that actions may follow a causality of this sort, known to God beforehand. He accordingly admits that human beings are subject to this causality, in the same way that any other living being is; for example, to be subject to a certain external impression which gives rise to an image of one sort or another, it is not within the power of choice.<sup>594</sup> Origen holds that in general external natural causes do not lie within the power of man's choice.<sup>595</sup> In simple words, this kind of causality means this: A man is free as regards his choice of moral action -yet he is also a part of the natural reality. If he is on the fifth floor of a building and jumps out of the window, he will fall down and be harmed. His freedom does not entail that he is "free" not to be

subject to the law of gravity. This is the notion suggested by term "natural causality".

**Causality in rational action.** Another kind of causality pertains to what is understood as a reasonably expected course of events. This causality has not any deterministic character. It is because Origen considers freedom, as a fundamental faculty of rational beings, that he admits a contingency in regard to the choices of free will: "And if someone says that the outcome may be this but it is contingent that it might be a different one, we admit that this is true. What is not contingent is that God may be false; contingency applies only to what is contingent on occurring and it is possible for anyone to think that certain things may occur or may not occur."<sup>595</sup> Therefore "our freedom of will is in no way affected by the fact that God knows what is going to be done by everyone".<sup>597</sup>

Therefore this causality which Origen admits as existing *during* an aeon does not stand *beyond* the freedom of rational beings; for all possibilities for free action are open.

**Existential causality.** By contrast, there is another kind of causality which is realized at the end of an aeon, namely during<sup>598</sup> a judgement. This causality appears to stand *beyond* the freedom of rational creatures.

The moment at which judgement will occur is a result of free moral action of rational creatures; for this judgement takes place during the consummation, occurring "to the entire world which is in need of purification whenever the evil in it becomes extensive",<sup>599</sup> yet there are certain occurrences which are not under the control of creaturely freedom.

First, this freedom, as moral action, may accelerate or delay the occurrence of the end of an aeon, yet the very moment that it occurs belongs to God's choice alone. It is beyond our knowledge when the end of

the aeon will occur.<sup>600</sup>

Second, the very fact that a consummation takes place at the end of an aeon.

Third, the fact that a judgement takes place at the same time.

Fourth, the rank of life, to which a rational being will be transposed in order to in the aeon following the judgement.

All these elements constitute a supreme causality which is virtually beyond the freedom of rational beings. For they cannot avert the "purification" of the world; they also cannot avert the fact that judgement and rearrangement of rational creatures in the various ranks of life takes place at that time. This causality is a *datum* in the make-up of the whole world and it stems from the will of God only. This is as a datum as the very fact that this world exists as a *καταβολή*. For once the fall occurred, the existence of the world is beyond the choice of the will of rational beings; they can strive for the end to come [see chapter 5] but the realization of this expectation depends upon God's judgement. This is why Origen states that "human will is not sufficient in order to reach the end"<sup>601</sup> and "God arranges the things of the world in the appropriate *kairoi* and he alone knows the reasons of what occurs at these times".<sup>602</sup>

Rational creatures cannot escape this supreme causality. Their freedom itself is the *cause* of this causality, while their existential status (that is, the rank of life in which they are placed) is the *effect*. The will of rational creatures is entirely free to act during an aeon and to come to a dialectical relation to the will of God. What cannot be escaped, however, is that this will will be judged according to God's impartial righteousness.<sup>603</sup> Hence, the very fact of judgement, although occurring in certain moments of the continuum of time, actually affects and determines the conception of *all* time. This is why Origen avers that this causality "is a doctrine which should be regarded as an eternal

law" (νόμον αἰώνιον)<sup>604</sup> and therefore it is a fundamental element in the entire make up of creation.

This causality itself presupposes the existence of time. For no relation between *cause* (as something *before*) and *effect* (as something *after*) could make sense in the absence of time. The entire world is temporal and it is only within time that freedom of creatures can make sense. For freedom presupposes the possibility of (at least) a dilemma, of thinking upon it, of decision and choice. All these faculties can make sense only as *successions* in time. For a rational creature *first* faces a multitude of possibilities, *then* considers them, *then* forms his will and *then* chooses. Thus the notion of *possibility* of a choice makes sense only as being *before* the choice itself.<sup>605</sup>

**The notion of pre-existent causes.** Holding this conception of time and motion, Origen goes ahead with developing his notion of "pre-existent causes". This is exactly what underlines the existential causality as well as his conviction about freedom of will.

Beside all other reasons, there is one particular one leading Origen to affirm a continuity of time throughout the aeons: This is because in the "extension" of time a causality is established and this causality is extended in more than one aeon. The arrangement (of the rational beings in the various ranks of life) existing in an aeon is directly related to both the previous and the next aeon. For this present arrangement is the *effect* of the free moral action which occurred in the past aeon. At the same time, the "movement" (that is to say, the moral action) taking place during this aeon is the *cause* for the arrangement in the aeon to come.

The continuity of time makes possible for this notion to be established. Besides, the continuum of time is not affected by the occurrence of rearrangement of rational creatures in the various ranks of life, since that moment (the "moment" of judgement) is regarded as

having no duration at all. Thus there is not "break" of the continuation of time at the moment when a rearrangement of rational beings in the ranks of life takes place. The notion of this rearrangement taking place "in the twinkling of an eyelid", is particularly useful to Origen, as we have seen.

Hence the existential status of rational beings during this aeon is the *result* of pre-existent causes. Again, it is a scriptural basis which is sought for this notion to be grounded:

"It follows, I think, that we must also inquire what are the causes which lead the soul of man to be influenced at one time by good spirits and at another time by bad. I suspect that it is due to certain causes which are older even than our birth in this body, as John indicated by his leaping and rejoicing in his mother's womb when the voice of Mary's salutation sounded in the ears of his mother Elisabeth, and as is declared by the prophet Jeremiah who, 'before he was formed in his mother's belly' was known by God and 'before he came forth from the womb' was sanctified by him, and while yet a boy received the gift of prophecy.<sup>606</sup> On the other hand it is clearly proved that some people are possessed right from their earliest years, that is, are born with an accompanying daemon, while others are declared by the testimony of histories to have been under supernatural control from boyhood, and others still have from their earliest years been indwelt by a daemon whom they term a Python,<sup>607</sup> that is, a spirit of ventriloquism.

"In the face of these examples, those who maintain that everything in this world is governed by the providence of God, a doctrine which is also part of our faith, can give no answer, as it seems to me, which will prove divine providence to be free from all suspicion of injustice; except to say that there were certain pre-existent causes which led these souls, before they were born into the body, to contract some degree of guilt in their sensitive or emotional nature, in consequence of which

divine providence has judged them worthy of enduring these sufferings. For the soul always possesses free will, both when in the body and when out of the body<sup>608</sup> and the will's freedom always moves in the direction either of good or evil, nor can the rational sense, that is, the mind or soul, ever exist without some movement either good or evil. It is probable that these movements furnish grounds for merit even before the souls do anything in this world, so that in accordance with such causes or merits they are ordained by the divine providence right from their birth, yes, and even before it, if I may so speak, to endure conditions either good or evil."<sup>609</sup>

In the same context, it is stated that "...by reason of his merits in some previous life Jacob had deserved to be loved by God to such an extent as to be worthy of being preferred to his brother..."<sup>610</sup> There are "older causes to account for the 'vessel of honour' and the 'vessel of dishonour' "; so the "older reasons why Jacob was loved and Esau hated lie with Jacob before he came into the body and with Esau before he entered Rebecca's womb".<sup>611</sup>

Hence "...for antecedent causes a different position of service is prepared by the Creator for each one in proportion to the degree of his merit, which depends on the fact that each, in being created by God as a mind or rational spirit, has personally gained for himself, in accordance with the movements of his mind and the disposition of his heart, a greater or less share of merit, and has rendered himself lovable or it may be hateful to God."<sup>612</sup>

The conclusion is that "...each being, whether of heaven or earth or below the earth, may be said to possess within himself the causes of diversity antecedent to his birth in the body. For all things were created by the Word of God and were set in order through the operation of his righteousness; and in his gracious compassion he provides for all and exhorts all to be cured by whatever remedies they may, and incites them



to salvation.<sup>613</sup>

This causality existing in Origen's conception of time underline the substantial sequence of the aeons into the continuous extension of time; it also underlines that although in principle time is perceived as an element of the make-up of the world, and therefore a *natural* element, it is also deeply involved in *metaphysical* considerations, since it is the venue where God's will (and not only the creaturely one) is realized. Thus, the notions of continuity of time, "vertical" discontinuity of space and uniformity of nature of rational creatures, all together play a significant role in the exposition of the conception of this Causality and its deeper significance.

There are serious reasons for Origen to consider this causality established in time. We have already mentioned the first reason, namely that in this way freedom (and, thus, free moral action) becomes meaningful as it is oriented towards a goal.

The second reason is that Origen wishes to stress that God is impartial and righteous in respect of the action of rational creatures. These conceptions of God are stated as "principles", namely the "principle of impartiality"<sup>614</sup> as well as the "principle of righteousness".<sup>615</sup>

The third reason pertains to Origen's aim to establish a Christian conception of time contrasted to either the various Greek or the Gnostic ones.

Thus, as regards the past aeon, this causality *explains* the present existential status of rational beings so that God's impartiality and righteousness remain unquestioned. Regarding the next aeon, free moral action is oriented to a goal and thus freedom is rendered meaningful by expectation and hope. There is future end which attributes a deeper meaning to freedom and, therefore, to time. This is why in Origen's theology terms like *prophecy*, *promise*, *hope*, *expectation*,

*fulfilment, realization* are used. If there were no orientation towards the future and no hope, then freedom would be absolutely meaningless; subsequently time would lose its fundamental significance and cruciality; it would just be a "natural" element of the world, as it was to the early Stoics. In the Greek conception of recurrence of identical worlds, future has nothing to promise; moral action vanishes into triviality. This was the deeper meaning of Marcus Aurelius' frustration.

It is out of this conception of time that Origen regards judgement as a "kairos"<sup>616</sup> in which promise, expectation and hope are fulfilled. Yet it is out of the conviction of God's goodness that this judgement is regarded as not the "final" one nor is the consummation regarded as the "final" end of the world. Creaturely freedom, expectation of an ultimate realization of hope as well as the belief in God's goodness lead a conception of time comprising succeeding aeons. "Consummations" and "judgements" are the fixed points in which causality is realized. Besides, the continuation of time through these fixed points has the meaning of giving rational beings one more chance for improvement and salvation, in this way corroborating God's goodness.

**Time as the extension of freedom.** Thus time is not simply an element of the natural world, be it "seen" or "not seen". It is the extension where freedom is realized. In contrast to the early Stoics who did not relate the question of time to morality (but they considered it as just a "natural" problem), in Origen this correlation is apparent. In *homLuc* he quotes Luke, 1,80, commenting on it as follows: " 'To grow' has a twofold meaning; it means to grow in body, where human freedom does not collaborate; and it means to grow spiritually, where freedom is the cause of growth."<sup>617</sup>

Time is an "extension" and a "dimension of life" where it is not simply the morally colourless motion of natural world that takes place, but it is where freedom is manifested and realized in a crucial way.

Referring to the disciples asking Jesus who was the traitor foretold by him himself,<sup>618</sup> Origen states: "For they knew that, being humans, the choice of those still in progress is convertible and this choice is susceptible of willing the contrary to those willing before."<sup>619</sup> And in *commMatt*, (quoting Matt.7,9-11): "why did he call the disciples as worthless? because eventhough they followed freely, they still had the changeability of human mind. And it is only the son of God who is unchangeable both to his divine and human nature."<sup>620</sup> For "it is only animals which do not change from a lower gender to a more noble one or vice versa; but, as far as men are concerned, it is always possible to see people either just or evil; or to see them reaching virtue out of evil or quitting improvement towards virtue and falling into evil."<sup>621</sup> as "nothing in human nature is permanent".<sup>622</sup>

Accordingly, when Origen interprets the meaning of ἀρχή as "beginning" of the "extension" of time, he relates it to "movement" perceiving this movement as moral action.<sup>623</sup>

Certainly the Stoics held that it is moral action that is of utmost significance.<sup>624</sup> Marcus Aurelius in contrast to the early Stoics, correlates morality to time, considering time itself as a moral question, as we have seen. Is this a point of affinity of Origen's conception of time to a certain Stoic one?

The answer is no; for the way Marcus relates time to morality is totally different (if not exactly opposed to) the way Origen does it. To Marcus, time is the *ultima* impasse and responsible for the "distruction" of human action, especially of human moral action. Marcus again and again personifies time. It seems almost to be the governor of the physical world and the source (or destroyer) of its reality. It swallows up all action.<sup>625</sup> So the fact that Marcus does not refer to the early Stoics cannot be coincidental. J. Rist accepts that it might be coincidental, yet he acknowledges that it is a strange coincidence

because the manner in which Marcus speaks of time, would not square easily with these definitions.<sup>626</sup>

How Origen relates time to morality stands in contrast to the manner Marcus does it. For his stance towards time is totally different. To Marcus time is the ultimate impasse; to Origen time is the means through which hope can be realized.<sup>627</sup> As time is the field where rational creatures strive for their restoration, it is regarded as the means to *realize* this goal and not as a destroyer of moral action. It is clear that the deeper pessimism of Marcus is due to the inherent incapability of Stoicism for transcendence. The desire for redemption is distinguishable in Marcus more than in any other Stoic -besides it is a general symptom of his era. Origen met Stoicism at a time when this philosophy demonstrated symptoms of degeneration and impasse. His presuppositions, however, were different and so were the aims of his thought. This is why he has been able to employ Stoic notions and yet to transform them so vigorously and radically that they eventually come in stark contrast to Stoic thought itself.

In fact, Origen uses Stoic categories attributing to them a content stemming from his Christian faith. He regards time as an indispensable means towards the realization of hope; it is his conviction that rational beings are endowed with free will; he holds a broader conception of the world and a notion of Causality and Judgement establishing an intrinsic meaning on time itself. These are serious reasons for him to employ the notion of prolongation of time.

So, although the notion itself sounds similar to the Stoic one, in fact it stems from not just different but stark opposite presuppositions and aims.

Existential causality is a guarantee that time is not a destroyer of moral action and that this action does not vanish into triviality. Time not only does not depress Origen, but this time, the time of this aeon, is

not enough to him -in contrast to Marcus Aurelius who did not regard prolongation of time as necessary, as we have seen. This is why he Origen time as stretching throughout many aeons. It is his faith to the goodness of God that makes Origen to hold that there is always time available to rational creatures so that they act freely and return to God by both his help<sup>628</sup> and their free moral action.

However, there is one point which should be clarified. In chapter 4 we shall discuss briefly the simplistic distinction drawn between Greek and Hebrew thought, which has been widely repeated (rather than each time pondered upon) by scholars. A facet of this distinction is to introduce the notion of *quality of time*<sup>629</sup> According to this distinction, in Greek thought the "quality" of past time is the same with that of present time and thus "time is homogeneous".<sup>630</sup> In fact, however, the notion of quality of time is meaningless. *Time in itself* has not quality at all. It is a *natural* element of the make-up of the world and natural elements have no moral quality whatsoever. Time has also a *metaphysical* significance because it is *in time* that the encounter of divine will and creaturely will takes place. But, in that case, the notion of quality applies to *free moral action in time* and not to *time itself*. Regarding this "action", time can have an intrinsic *meaning* -but no "quality". Certainly expressions about "quality of time" are being used, yet they make sense *only* once this distinction has been made. However, it is inaccurate to speak of "quality of time" in a strict theological or philosophical sense, when one ponders upon the problematique of time proper.

It would be useful to consider Origen's notion of pre-existing causes in view of the assertion that it was a characteristic of Greek thought to think *causally*, and consequently in terms of natural science, whereas Hebrew thought thinks *finally* or *teleologically*. This contention has been made by T. Boman, who states: "The one puts itself outside the

events and looks backwards; the other puts itself into the events and thinks itself 'into' the psychic life of the man involved and how they directed themselves forward in thought and will. The one concerns itself with the *past*, the other with the *present and future*.<sup>631</sup> Likewise, B. van Gronigen contends that the fundamental orientation of Greek thought was toward the past.<sup>632</sup> He contends that, for the Greek, the prevailing type of history was *aetiological* in which the inner dynamic or driving power in the historical process was sought in the *apxai* which was understood not so much in the sense of "beginning" as in the sense of "causes" (αἰτίαι).<sup>633</sup>

We shall not discuss these contentions in themselves because such a discussion is beyond our scope. We only say that we deem such distinctions to be over-simplistic. Origen's thought is a illustration of how these distinctions cannot withstand any severe criticism:

Origen does establish an *aetiological* character in the process in space-time. He also has no hesitation to speak about *αἰτίαι* and even *apxai* -in fact the latter term appears in the title of the *Princ.* Despite this, however, his thought is par excellence a *teleological* one (as we shall argue in chapter 3), he is entirely preoccupied with the *future* and not with the past. The very notion of Causality established in his conception of time constitutes a perception of the *eschatologica* process in a way stressing creaturely freedom. Thus he can think both *causally* and *teleologically*. To scholars such as Boman and van Gronigen, this affirmation would seem contradictory. The study of Origen's thought proves that it is not contradictory; and it further proves that the over-simplistic distinctions and contentions like the above-mentioned, in spite of their appealing formulation, are weak and indeed quite invalid in terms of philosophy of history.

At any rate, it is exactly this perpetual movement in time that provides rational beings' action with all possibilities. These

possibilities can be realized through the Causality existing in this conception of time. Thus Origen asserts that "the son of devil" may become "son of God"; for "a son of devil is not a such by structure" but he has been what it is because his own action.<sup>634</sup> What differentiates rational creatures is the *result* of their free action.

This is how Origen maintains his "natural" view of his world relating it to metaphysical implications at the same time. Accordingly, he defines an "aeon" as "natural system, comprising various bodies and containing differences of reason which stem from the difference in knowledge of God."<sup>635</sup>

This definition explicates the view of "aeon" as a "natural" reality yet related to God. In the same definition the notion of causality is clearly suggested through the term *évakev* (because of). The notion of perpetual movement, as moral action, means that existential causality existing in Origen's conception of time is not a contingent one. This means that it cannot be said that *if* a cause arises then the effect appears. The cause does exist all the time; for *cause* is free moral action itself, which in Origen's world is perpetual.

So this causality, as fully existing in time, determines the conception of time itself and it is a constitutive element of creation. But once it was established God himself is impartial. Thus, although the very existence of this causality is beyond creaturely freedom, yet both *cause* and *effect* are entirely dependent upon creaturely freedom. For both cause and result appear to be determined by free moral action. Accordingly, this causality is entirely existing in time as both cause and result stand in a temporal sequence.

With respect to this point, we endorse H. Chadwick's assertion that "Origen is quite clear that the expansion of Christianity is not to be accounted for by any naturalistic explanations."<sup>636</sup> although this would seem confusing to T. Boman who contends that "to think *causally* "

necessarily means to think "in terms of *natural science*".<sup>637</sup>

Nevertheless, here is another notion of causality, according to which it is only the cause that stems from creature's will and from time; the effect (namely God's response in his dialectical relation with creaturely freedom) stems entirely from God's will and therefore, although manifested into the world, it virtually has its origin in timelessness. Such is the case of prayer; and in that case causality is not a relation fully in time, but it is understood as a relation between time and timelessness.

**Causality between time and timelessness.** The question of the relation between God and man through prayer is, in Origen's thought, directly related to the question of free will. It is not incidental that his analyses about motion, as discussed in the previous pages, are extended in his *de Or.* The challenge which Origen is up against is the question of whether it makes any sense to pray at all.

Thus he deals with the views of those who deny the use of prayer, not because they deny the existence of God, but just because they place God over the universe and affirm that there is a Providence.<sup>638</sup> Their argument is based on two particular points:

First, they affirm that "God knows all things before they be"<sup>639</sup> and nothing which happens is known to him for the first time when it happens, as if it were not known before this. This is a view of Origen's, too. Yet those who deny the use of prayer adduce the argument that "the heavenly Father knoweth what things" we "have need of before" we "ask him", as stated in Matt. 6, 8. Therefore, he who is the Father and Creator of the world, who "loveth all things that are and abhorreth none of the things which" he "hath made",<sup>640</sup> should dispense what is for the well-being of each one without being prayed to. Just as the father does, who protects his babies and does not wait upon their request, either because they are unable to ask at all, or because through ignorance they



often wish to receive things that are clean contrary to their profit and advantage; and human beings are much further off from God than mere children are from the mind of their parents.

There is also a second argument; for those who deny the use of prayer aver that future is not only foreknown to God, but also predetermined by him and nothing comes to pass which has not been predetermined by him. For if one were to pray that the sun should rise, he would be regarded as foolish fellow, for requesting that something should happen through his prayer, which would happen in any case without his prayer. Moreover, if "the wicked are estranged from the womb"<sup>641</sup> and the righteous man has been determined from his "mother's womb"<sup>642</sup> and "the children being not yet born neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth",<sup>643</sup> there is one conclusion to be reached: Since God is unchangeable and has predetermined everything that is, and abides in what he has pre-arranged, it is obviously inconsistent to pray with the idea of altering his plan by prayer or of entreating him as one who has not pre-arranged it but awaits each one's prayer. This would be to make prayer the reason why God arranges what is fitting for him who prays, and settles then what is deemed proper, as if it had not already been foreseen by him.

Thus there is a twofold argument against the necessity for praying. Origen stated it through the same words with which the problem had been posed to him: "First; if God knows the future beforehand, and it must come to pass, prayer is vain. Secondly; if all things happen according to the will of God, and if what is willed by him is fixed, and nothing of what he wills can be changed, prayer is vain."<sup>644</sup>

The question which Origen is up against here is not only the use of prayer. The very question is whether or not the dialectical relation between God and creatures actually exists and makes sense; and further,

whether a creature's action may *cause* a responding action from God. In fact prayer is only a particular case of the question whether an action taking place in time and referred to timelessness may *cause* a reaction from timelessness at a time subsequent to this temporal action. The very question, therefore, is whether Origen holds a notion of causality of this sort, namely a causality extended in both time and timelessness. And we shall assert that, indeed, Origen does hold such a notion.

His argument is again based on the freedom of will. He asserts that "from the creation"<sup>645</sup> and "the foundation of the world"<sup>646</sup> everything has been known to God and therefore he has foreknowledge of what the choice of our free will will be. He does not fail to stress again that foreknowledge of God is not the cause of all future events or of future actions performed by us out of our free will and choice. God has arranged everything before hand in accordance with what he has seen concerning each act of free will and what will be answered by his providence.<sup>647</sup>

Given this fundamental opinion, he articulates his view of the relation between God and man through prayer. Since each act of free will is known to God it is reasonable to assume that he also knows what someone will pray for, his kind of disposition the nature of his faith and what he desires to happen to him. It is according to this knowledge that God disposes things somewhat as follows:

"I will hear this man who will pray prudently, for the very prayer's sake which he will pray; but this man I will not hear, either because he will be unworthy to be heard, or because he will pray for things which are neither profitable for him who prays, nor proper for me to grant; and for this prayer (let us say) of so-and-so I will not hear him; but for that I will hear him."<sup>648</sup>

Also, "I will grant this or that to this man who will pray, because it is meet for me to do this for a man who will pray, blamelessly and

will not prove careless in the matter of prayer; and when he shall pray for a certain time, I will bestow this or that upon him 'exceeding abundantly above' what he 'asks for'<sup>649</sup> for it is meet for me to overpass him in good deeds and to supply him with more than he has been able to ask for.<sup>650</sup>

Thus Origen develops his argument by putting his own conception of the mind of God into words as if spoken by God himself.<sup>651</sup> What is of significance here is that he regards God as "responding" on a *causative* ground. Thus there are expressions like "*because* of the prayer itself" (δι' αὐτὴν τὴν εὐχὴν),<sup>652</sup> "*because* he is unworthy of being heard" (διὰ τὸ ἀνάξιον αὐτὸν ἔσεσθαι τοῦ ἐπακουσθήσεσθαι),<sup>653</sup> "*because* he has prayed these things for" (διὰ τὸ ταῦτα αὐτὸν εὐξασθαι),<sup>654</sup> "*because* it is meet for me to do this for a man who will pray blamelessly and will not prove careless in the matter of prayer",<sup>655</sup> "*for* it is meet for me to overpass him in good deeds" (ἐμοὶ γὰρ τόνδε πρέπει νικᾶν ἐν ταῖς εὐποιαις).<sup>656</sup>

What these expressions show is that the relation between man and God in prayer is conceived as a *causative* relation. The *cause* of this relation is the prayer itself and has its source in time; the *effect* is God's response and it obviously has its source in God's timelessness.

Thus each of the two legs (*cause-effect*) of this causality lies in realities different with respect to time. This causality, therefore, may be seen either from the point of view of time or that of timelessness. The first is quite simple; for this relation is realized in time, namely the result of prayer (whatever this result is, namely fulfilment of the petition, or not)) is understood to come *after* the prayer. To see this relation from a timeless point of view is extremely difficult, if not impossible.

It has been asserted that Origen holds that God has answered all prayers before all time or pre-eternally.<sup>657</sup> Such an assertion, however, is actually a denial of the very fact that the dialectical relation between

God and man takes place at the time of the prayer on. It should be objected nevertheless that this sentence makes sense only if it is seen from a temporal point of view; for from that of timelessness it does not make sense to distinguish between "before all time" and "now", as those categories make sense only from a temporal point of view.

However, if one enquires into Origen's expressions carefully some conclusions may be drawn. Thus, what those expressions show is that what God holds before time is not the *response* itself but his *knowledge of the response*. This means that God, regarded from our point of view, acts at the time of the prayer; the dialectical relation between God and him who prays is fully real at that time; this is why Origen portrays the state of prayer as follows: "...he whose mind is set on prayer is in some sense profited merely by the settled condition involved in praying, when he has disposed himself to approach God and speak in his presence as to one who watches over him and is present."<sup>658</sup> As we saw, Origen adopts the method of putting his own conceptions of the mind of God into words as if spoken by God himself. What is quite characteristic in that case is that he presents God as speaking in Future tense; "I shall hear" (ἐπακούσομαι), "I shall not hear" (οὐκ ἐπακούσομαι), "he will be unworthy of being heard" (διὰ τὸ ἀνάξιον αὐτὸν ἔσεσθαι τοῦ ἐπακουσθῆσθαι), "I will grant this or that" (τόδε μὲν τινα ποιήσω), "I will bestow" (δωρήσομαι).<sup>659</sup>

Certainly, it is Origen himself who says that " whenever verbs are applied to timeless being one should not understand the timely implications of verbs in a strict sense", yet at the same point he states that Future tense indicates what "will exist in the future".<sup>660</sup> From a timeless point of view, there is no "future". Yet what Origen indicates here is that the action of God is actually realized in a dialectical relation to the prayer, at the time of prayer. This means that the response of God is regarded *as an action* which takes place at that time.

This becomes more clear from the way Origen relates this action of God explicitly relating it to time. In the same work he presents God thinking as follows: "Moreover, to such an one, who will become such as this, I will send this ministering angel, to be his fellow-worker from this time onward (ἀπό τούδε ἀρξόμενον τοῦ χρόνου), and to continue with him until such a time (μέχρι τούδε).", while to another "who after (μετά) embracing higher teaching is about to grow somewhat weaker and turn backwards to wordly things, from him I will remove (ἀνοστήσω) this mightier fellow-worker".<sup>651</sup> This is why Origen states that "he who ... prays will hear 'while' he is yet speaking", perceiving, by the power of him who 'hears in heaven'<sup>652</sup> the 'Here I am' having cast aside, before he prayed, all dissatisfaction concerning Providence."<sup>653</sup>

This means that God responds (that is, *acts*) at the time of prayer. What exists before is his *knowledge* of this act, in the same sense that God has foreknowledge of everything that will happen in the world. Any notion of *prior*, therefore, does not pertain to God's act (or, *response* to the prayer) but to his knowledge of what will happen in the "train of future events" (κατά τόν εἰρηόν τῶν ἐσομένων).<sup>654</sup> This knowledge of God has to do with his providence and the expressions presenting God as "electing" someone (as Paul, for example) are based on the fact that God is he "who knows the future events" and therefore "chooses" Paul before he knows what Paul, due to his free will, will do during his life.<sup>655</sup> Thus "God tries people not because he does not know the outcome of their trial but in order to give them the opportunity to do what they want because of their freedom of choice".<sup>656</sup> In view of that, "prophecy is a prediction of future events" yet an occurrence "took place not because it was said" but "it was said because it was going to take place".<sup>657</sup>

It is out of the manifestation of God in the world that "we all have some conception of God and form some notions of whatever kind

about him"; thus "we see his holiness as he creates, foresees, judges, chooses, forsakes, receives, turns away from, deems worthy of honour, punishes each one according to his deserts".<sup>658</sup> Through conceptions like these, creatures have an apprehension of God and come in a dialectical relation to him. In these categories "foreseeing" is included as well; yet it is not understood as a kind of "action" of God in relation to creatures. This foreknowledge refers rather to God's knowledge of the appropriate time (καιρός) which he will choose for his action. It is in a Greek extant from the *Princ* that this perception is stated:

"For souls are, so to speak, innumerable and their habits are innumerable and equally so are their movements, their purposes, their inclinations and their impulses, of which there is only one perfect superintendent, who has full knowledge both of the times (καιρούς) and the appropriate aids and the paths and the ways, namely the God and Father of the universe."<sup>659</sup>

In *Cels*, however, he emphasizes that "since man is able to consider everything and to arrange everything in order, it should be conceded that he is working together with providence (συνεργούντα τῇ προνοίᾳ ἀποδεκτέον), does works which are the product not merely of the natural instincts with which he is endowed by the providence of God but also of his own independent thought. (καί οὐ μόνως τῆς προνοίας Θεοῦ ἔργα ἐπιτελοῦντα ἀλλὰ καί τῆς αὐτοῦ)".<sup>670</sup>

The notion of causality between time and timelessness is perceived not only in relation to the creaturely function of prayer but it pertains to any aspect of the dialectical relation between God and rational creatures. Indeed Origen goes as far as to affirm a sort of *contingency* in God's action towards men. In *homJer* he portrays this contingency by commenting on the saying "If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, *then* I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. ... If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not in

my voice, *then* I will repent of the good, where I said I would benefit them".<sup>571</sup>

Certainly Origen feels it necessary to "explain the notion of God's repentance; for to repent seems to be a blemish and unworthy not only of God but even of a wise man" as the notion of repentance usually applies to what has been considered well. As God has a foreknowledge of future events he cannot be said that he has not considered things well and therefore he repents.<sup>572</sup> This is a question to which he devotes extensive analyses concluding that these are figures of speech employed by God in his relation to men. It is like speaking to "babies" and thus he "pretends" not to know the future things<sup>573</sup> so that "self-determination is free"<sup>574</sup> and cannot be put in question.<sup>575</sup> Since, therefore, "God foreknows everything he neither becomes angry nor does he repent" but "repentance" means God's "casting off a former thing and metathesis (μετάθεσις) to another dispensation (οικονομία) of things".<sup>576</sup> Thus "repentance of God is said to be the metathesis (μετάθεσις) of divine dispensation (οικονομία) from one thing to another. For "the volatility of human choice cannot be applied to God; it is us and because of ourselves that provoke the changes of the divine dispensation by proving ourselves unworthy of the honour gifted by God". Thus when God says "I have repented for having ordained Saul as a king" instead of saying "I want to bestow the power of reigning to another one and suspending him from being powerful". It is as if God said that "Saul made himself unworthy of being a king, so if I had a nature susceptible of repenting I could repent about him. Then why he was ordained? Because at that time he was worthy. But, changing his mind he has become unworthy".

These deductive arguments are quite indicative of how strongly Origen feels about the dialectical relation between God and rational creatures. There is no need to challenge his arguments on a strictly logical basis; there is no need to ask why God made this choice since he

foreknows that Saul would be unworthy, in the same sense that he "chooses" Paul by foreknowing what Paul would become by his own free will.<sup>677</sup> In this syllogism the notion of "divine dispensation" is involved and it is his conviction that it is not "easy" for men to know "the reasons of dispensation".<sup>678</sup> What is of importance in these affirmations is that the will of God and the creaturely will encounter each other in space-time and indeed they come to a dialectical relation. This means that the responsibility which of necessity accompanies creaturely freedom is perceived in the context of a causality established between the time of the world and divine timelessness.

Thus God has foreknowledge of the causative dialectical relations between him and the creatures; yet the causality *itself* is realized at a certain time. We should, nevertheless, again emphasize that the distinction between *foreknowledge* of a causative relation and a *realization* of it makes sense regarded only from a temporal point of view; for in the final analysis it is in terms of time that this distinction is based on.

From a timeless point of view, however, this distinction does not make actual sense exactly because of the absence of time. Indeed, in a causality where both time and timelessness are involved we cannot expect the conventional temporal succession, as in a merely temporal causality. For example, in a temporal causality the cause is always *prior* to the result or, at most, simultaneous to it (as in Aristotle's example of the eclipse). But in a causality of the sort we discuss here this is not necessarily implied. Thus, Origen regards the future event as the *cause* of God's foreknowledge of it.<sup>679</sup> This means that God's foreknowledge is the *result* of the fact that an event will take place and future occurrence of the event itself is the cause of God's foreknowledge; that is, the cause is *posterior* to the result. However, the term "future" applies only to a temporal point of view and this causality (where the



succession of cause and result is reversed) is regarded from a temporal point of view. For God knows the future, but, due to his timelessness, the term "succession" from a timeless point of view does not make any sense at all; thus it is a temporal point of view from which it is said that God fore-knows the future; for he knows it, yet not *as future*.

If such a statement would seem strange and unconceivable a hundred years ago, it should not seem so in our day. For the twentieth century marks the radical change of a world-picture which (with comparatively minor alterations) lasted two and a half thousand years. A vast number of works of modern scholars on time should be disposed for the simple reason that they insist treating the question on the premise that the universe is the Newtonian one. We understand that the Theory of Relativity is not easily readable yet the fact is that for more than eighty years this theory is being constantly vindicated. Therefore Philosophy should again return to its chapter I, and this chapter is the study of the world-picture according to the twentieth century perception. This is no the right place to develop this argument, so in returning to our particular point we say this: Even in our visible universe it is now generally accepted that the notion of *simultaneity* does not make sense at all. Our "now" has not an objective correspondent "now" in a place some thousands light-years away. The arguments about prayer since antiquity are based upon this premise: it is taken for granted that God's "now" is objectively the same with the earthly "now". In view of the fact that even in this visible space (not to mention other, non-Euclidean, spaces studied intensively, particularly during the last decade in connexion with the problem of Cosmology) there is no simultaneity, the contention that God's "now" is the same with the *earthly* "now" is just ludicrous.

In view of that, R. Sorabji's assertion<sup>680</sup> that Origen wavers on whether God's changeless will should be viewed as timeless or existing

in advance does not actually represent Origen's view of the will of God. R. Sorabji (appealing to *deOr* 5-6) takes the view that Origen plumps for the latter, namely that God's will exists in advance. Yet this is not the case. Indeed God's will exists timelessly and is manifested in time in dialectical relation to creaturely freedom. Thus, from a temporal (that is, historical) point of view, God's will, quite paradoxically, appears to be formed *in time* and indeed *at the time when* a certain creaturely act took place. This is why Origen speaks of God's "repentance".

On the other hand, if God's will is regarded from a timeless point of view, then simply the notion of "in advance" makes no sense at all. Thus the case is not as simple as the distinction between what is "timeless" and what is "in advance". The actual distinction is over whether God's will is regarded from a temporal or an atemporal point of view. In the first case, God's will exist neither in advance nor timelessly, but it is perceived as *formed at the time* when a certain dialectical relation between God and creatures takes place. What exists timelessly is God's knowledge of events, not his will. But from an atemporal point of view, these distinctions simply do not make sense. Once, therefore, we (as temporal beings) regard God from a temporal point of view, *his will does not exist in advance* even though his *knowledge of his will* exists timelessly.

Indeed Origen does not speak of foreknowledge but simply of "knowledge" of God with respect to the entirety of time; thus he speaks the "richness of God's knowledge" of the things "past and present and future" yet he contrasts it with his "activity" in the world as Logos.<sup>651</sup> In respect of this, Origen actually did not face any dilemma of the sort that R. Sorabji describes.<sup>652</sup> In *deOr* he speaks of what God *knows* and not what God *will*s. Everything related to the notion of "will" actually is the *knowledge* of his will at the time when a certain dialectical relation between God and a man's will be realized. So the case is not

that everything is determined in advance, as R. Sorabji remarks. The case is that everything is known timelessly and the "will" itself is involved only when an occurrence takes place. So Origen denies any notion of *change of knowledge* but he has no hesitation in attributing to God a notion of *change of will* in the context of his dialectical relation to creatures. This is why it is a case of *causality* between time and timelessness.

In any event Origen does not hold that God has a "changeless plan for a sequence of events" as R. Sorabji<sup>693</sup> and P. Plass<sup>694</sup> and so many others assert. Such a view would deny Origen's fundamental doctrine of creaturely freedom, upon which his entire conception of time is based.

R. Sorabji asserts that God not only knows but also "intends" the sequence of events. Yet Origen holds such an opinion only with respect God's own actions, not to the creaturely ones of which God has only knowledge but no intention of his own. In stark contrast to Sorabji's opinion there, Origen *does* hold that God thinks in token-reflexive terms and this is exactly what constitutes the cruciality of every moment of Origen's conception of time as we argue in chapter 3,<sup>84</sup>. This is why he affirms that "even what seems to be completely unimportant is ruled by God's providence" (καί τὰ ἀχρηστά νομιζόμενα προνοία Θεοῦ διοικεῖται).<sup>695</sup> And "Through him all things were made, and in order that all things may be made by the Logos, he extends not to men only but even to the things supposed to be insignificant which are controlled by nature."<sup>696</sup> Also, "All these, down to the very least, God supervises by the power of his wisdom and distinguishes by the controlling hand of his judgement."<sup>697</sup> The mistake of R. Sorabji lies in the assertion that God established certain general principles in the world and thereafter he does not need to care about creatures *in particular*. The care of God for the world is stated as just a care for the world *as a whole*. But this is exactly the opposite of Origen's real views. This can be more clearly elucidated

from this statement of his: "But God cares not only for the whole (τοῦ ὅλου), as Celsus thinks, but he par excellence (ἐξαιρέτως) takes particular care of every rational creature (μέλει ... παντός λογικοῦ)".<sup>688</sup>

But this "providence" does not imply his "will" (τὴν βουλήν) but only his "foreknowledge" (πρόγνωσιν) which is distinct from the notion of his will.<sup>689</sup>

Also, in contrast to Sorabji's conclusion at the same point, Origen holds that God *is* omniscient and has full knowledge of even the last detail of what happens in the world. What R. Sorabji's asserts here (though not categorically) is that a conclusion which might be drawn from the *de Or* is that God does not need to think in token-reflexive terms and, therefore, a strict omniscience is not *needed* (his italics) by God. What he implies is that all God did in the world was to establish certain principles and contingencies and he thereafter does not need to know every detail of what happens in the world. Thus he propounds a solution according to which a conditionality could be introduced into what God wills: "he wills that *if* I pray *then* my prayer will be answered".<sup>690</sup> Such a view is absolutely beyond what Origen holds as it could diminish the utmost cruciality of free moral action in time and the immediate and continuous dialectical relation between the divine and creaturely freedom.

On the contrary, Origen speaks of *τὸ λεπτομερές τῆς προνοίας*, namely the immediate care of God for even what seems to be of non importance.<sup>691</sup>

In view of these statements of Origen, when Puech portrays the Christian view of time affirming that Providence is conceived as in every instance "particular"<sup>692</sup> he actually echoes Origen's view, quite unconsciously though, as he immediately after that point presents Origen as a representative of a "Greek" attitude even on this particular point.<sup>693</sup>

At any rate Origen regards God's knowledge as extended until the

last detail of what exists in space-time. And he certainly attributes to God a detailed knowledge of all time, namely what is "past and present and future" (Αὐτός γάρ μόνος γινώσκει τὰ πρῶην καὶ τὰ ἐνεστώτα καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα).<sup>694</sup>

The notion of "repentance" is one of those which par excellence underline the *crucial* and *dramatical* character of time, as we shall argue in the ensuing chapters.

In contrast to this, however, C. Lewis states: "To God (though not to me) I and the prayer I made in 1945 were just as much present at the creation of the world as they are now and will be a million years hence. God's creative act is timeless and timelessly adapted to the 'free' elements within it: but this timeless adaption meets our consciousness as a sequence of prayer and answer."<sup>695</sup>

There are two main misconstructions of Origen's thought here: First, the crucial distinction between *knowledge* of God and *will* of God has eluded Lewis. Secondly, the relation of divine will and human will in time is not just a matter of "consciousness" either of God or man. Origen is entirely indifferent to such a question. The question is the dialectical relation which is underlined by the *encounter* of these two *wills*. God has a timeless knowledge of it but this *encounter as a real historical occurrence* cannot be stated as "present" in God. For such an assertion destroys the cruciality of time and the full reality of the dialectical relation between God and man.

In fact, on this question Origen's thought is exactly the opposite of a notion about "a fixed transcendent plan of history" in a "timeless Platonic overworld" which provides "the basis for a sophisticated typological interpretation of history".<sup>696</sup> This is a widespread mistaken assertion about Origen's thought. If he held such a view he would never have articulated the notions of "recrucifixion" of Christ in the future.<sup>697</sup> If the course of history *as such* was "present" to God, then Christ would

not be regarded as "suffering" and "re-crucified" because of a creature's falling again into the same sins. If history is "present" in Christ then there is no reason for him to be regarded as "suffering". He would rather be regarded as indifferently observing the course of history, which is "fixed" according to a "transcendent plan". This is what Origen vigorously rejects, as we shall see in chapter 3. For what actually lies on the basis of this rejection is the *dramatic character of time* and the cruciality of the encounter of divine and creaturely will in it.

The question is not so simple as to make the simplistic distinction between what is "present" in God or what happens simultaneously with respect to both human and divine life. If the question of what is "present" is a remote place of the visible firmament needs a lot of treatment to receive a (relative) answer, the question of what is "present" to God is far more difficult. At any rate, such questions are no more susceptible of simplistic answers nowadays.

Regarding this relation from a temporal point of view, there is a distinction which imbues Origen's thought and actually elucidates his conception of this relation: *Knowledge* by God is implicitly regarded as a rather *passive* state. It is a characteristic of God to know everything. The *will* of God, however, implies a perception of God being in an *active* state, namely in active dialectical relation with creatures. There is no question that this distinction is but a conceptual one (if not awkward) and this is why Origen does not articulate it explicitly. Although somewhat rough, nevertheless, it helps as it provides human intellect with a portrayal of the conceptual distinction between the *knowledge* of God (even the knowledge of his will in its dialectical relation with creatures) and the *will* of God in itself.

If this conceptual distinction is not made, then Origen's conception of this question is bound to be misunderstood, as indeed it is. The basis for a positive approach to his thought on this point is actually the fact

that God is perceived as *really* involved in this dialectical encounter of his will to creaturely will in time. In the final analysis, the basis for a comprehension of Origen's thought is his conception of the *dramatic* character of time, which will be discussed further on in this work. We must emphasize also that in Origen's thought it does not actually make sense to speak of any "pattern of history" whatsoever. R. Markus has asserted that there can be no Christian philosophy of history in the "pattern-making" sense. There is no Christian pattern and indeed Christianity is the very negation of pattern.<sup>698</sup> If this assertion is to be accepted, then it can be said that in Origen's thought this negation of "pattern" is established in the strongest possible terms.

Certainly the topic of the relation between foreknowledge and freedom has been an outstanding question of debate ever since antiquity and the bibliography on this is tremendous. Our view is that in order to take the view that divine foreknowledge (or, timeless knowledge) constitutes a limitation of creaturely freedom one has to make a dialectical jump. For there is no logical span by which the *knowledge of future* can be related to the *future itself*. To predict one's actions is a phenomenon found even amongst human affairs. *Why* or *how* this prediction should be held responsible or affecting one's predicted actions is something which simply cannot be grounded on reason or dialectics. Thus the allegation that prediction indicates a limitation to freedom is but an arbitrary corollary, reached only by a logical jump.

We think that the distinction between "timeless knowledge" and "foreknowledge" applied to the *timeless* God is but an artificial one and makes no actual sense. It stems from a Newtonian world-view by scholars who will not face the fact that this view is not valid any more. Thus Nelson Pike,<sup>699</sup> J. R. Lucas,<sup>700</sup> G. Iseminger,<sup>701</sup> and R. Sorabji<sup>702</sup> are among those who argue that *fore-knowledge* would restrict human freedom whereas they concede that *timeless knowledge* would be in a

sense regarded as not restricting freedom. J. van Gerven asserts that God's timeless knowledge would not restrict human freedom was not yet even recognised by Augustine,<sup>703</sup> but R. Sharples argues that it was recognised by Boethius.<sup>704</sup> On this question there is an enormous bibliography.<sup>705</sup>

In our view, however, the arguments developed have two fundamental weaknesses:

First they are developed on the premiss that the actual make-up of the world is a Newtonian one. In fact they are all based on axioms such as "any moment of time is the same in all places (P. Gassendi) and "every indivisible moment of duration is everywhere" (Newton).<sup>705</sup>

Secondly, they are based on the artificial distinction (attributed to God) between *fore*-knowledge and timeless knowledge. In the final analysis this distinction makes the arbitrary assumption of attributing time to the *timeless* God. For this distinction can in no way make sense applied to God himself, but it is a relative conception about God when he is regarded from a temporal point of view.

The conclusion is that Origen holds a conception of causality between time and timelessness and grounds it upon the notion of freedom of rational creatures and on the fact that their will comes to a dialectical relation to the will of God. This causality is realized in time because it is there that the divine and creaturely will encounter each other; but, as it stems from this dialectical relation, this causality is extended both in time and timelessness.

**Timeless causality?** By the so-called Fragment 19, Koetschau has embodied in his edition of the *Princ* a passage in Greek from Justinian's *liber* which reads as follows:

"And if what has been subjected to Christ shall in the end be subjected to God, then all will lay aside their bodies; and I think that there will then be a dissolution of bodily nature into non-existence, to



come into existence a second time if rational beings should again fall".<sup>707</sup>

In accordance with this passage, Jerome, in *ep4v*, attributes to Origen this view:

"If all shall be subjected to God, then all will lay aside their bodies; and then the entire universe of bodily things will be dissolved into non-existence; but if necessity should demand it a second time, it would come into existence again in the event of fall of rational beings".<sup>708</sup>

Again, Koetschau has embodied in the same work the so-called Fragment 40, which is another passage of Justinian's from *libOr*, and reads thus: "It must needs be that the nature of bodies is not primary, but that it was created at intervals on account of certain falls that happened to rational beings, who came to need bodies; and again, that when their restoration is perfectly accomplished these bodies are dissolved into nothing, so that this is ever happening".<sup>709</sup>

Koetschau has also inserted one more passage from the same writing of Justinian's where it is stated this "when" rational creatures "rise again to the state in which they formerly were, completely putting away their evil and their bodies. Then again a second or a third or many more times they are enveloped in different bodies for punishment. For it is probable that different worlds have existed and will exist, some in the past and some in the future".<sup>710</sup>

Such allegations have been accepted as expressing Origen's views and such considerations led to the Anathemas decreed by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553. Koetschau has incorporated these Anathemas in the text of the *Princ*. G. Butterworth, in his translation in English, notes that although these Anathemas "cannot be taken as literal extracts from the *De Principiis*, they express the teaching of this work, doubtless for the most part in Origen's own words".<sup>711</sup> It exactly after

the point where those Anathemas have been incorporated in the *Princ* that Koetschau has inserted the passage of Justinian just mentioned above.

This being the way that Justinian was acquainted with Origen's views, it is not surprising that that Council declared those Anathemas. For what Justinian was considering as "Origen's views" is a profoundly distorted version of his authentic thought.

Justinian regarded the creation of "worlds" as taking place in a sort of "intervals" (ἐκ διαλειμάτων). This means that it should be timelessness, then time, then timelessness, then time again and so on. The notion of Origen's about consecutive worlds is directly connected to a notion of succession of incorporeality -corporeality -incorporeality -corporeality - and so on "for ever" (αἰεί).<sup>712</sup>

What Justinian as well as Jerome virtually allege here is that Origen was holding a notion of timeless causality. For he attributes to him the opinion that God has a timeless will according to which *whenever* a fall takes place a material world should appear.

What should be noted in the first place is that nowhere in his works in Greek Origen implies such a notion. What he calls *κοσμονοία* (actual creation of the world)<sup>713</sup> is *one* and unique event. We can find his expression "the beginning of the actual creation of the world" (ἀρχὴ τῆς κοσμονοίας).<sup>714</sup> His entire theology refers to the world from that "beginning" until the "end of things".<sup>715</sup> Nowhere is there even the slightest implication that this "creation" is a manifestation of some kind of "unchangeable will" of God or that it is an occurrence which has taken place "before" this creation or that it will happen again.

Our previous analyses on the relation of God to world show that what Origen was holding was totally different from what has been attributed to him by the above-mentioned passages.

If it is asserted that the fall is not a unique event and that it is

followed by a creation of a world, it follows that God is *himself* involved in a timeless causality. Therefore "creating" should be applied to God himself as something *compulsorily* accompanying his own being. Thus, in the final analysis, creation is not a product of God's own freedom but it is a product of the freedom of what, quite falsely, Jerome and Justinian regarded as "rational beings before the fall". There would be no notion more alien to Origen's authentic views, than that one. For what we have seen in chapter 1, is that creation is a product of God's free will and benevolent decision. Origen many times stresses that the Wisdom of God "willed" and "wanted" to establish a relation to "the future beings".

In this point we should recall the analyses made in chapter 1 about the crucial significance of Past tense used by Origen in the articulation of his views about the relation of God's free will to the world as a product of this will. The Past tense signifies that this decision of God was something which occurred *once*.

If Origen held a notion of timeless causality he would have said that the Wisdom of God "wills" and "wants" that *if* a fall takes place *then* a creation should emerge. But he does nothing of the sort. On the contrary, he clearly states that God created by his own free and benevolent decision. He does not say that the Wisdom God "wills" or "wants" the "establishment of a relation to the future beings" but he says that she "willed" and "wanted" to do so.

What this actually means is that God is not a Creator by essence -a fundamental notion of Origen's thought extensively discussed in chapter 1. If there was any kind of "necessity" or "timeless causality" due to which God *should* create the world, this could entail a certain *established relation* between God and the world. This very "causality" would be the point at which the being of God and the being of the world are *of necessity* related to each other. But this is exactly what Origen

strongly rejects and this attitude immediately stems from his notion of radical transcendence of God to the world and the notion of the radical hiatus between the divine being and the existence of the world.

That God "willed" to create this world is a *unique* product of his freedom -a product which came into being out of non-being. Although God remains radically transcendent to the world, he "established a creative relation" with it out of his goodness and not out of any necessity or causality.

This, in the final analysis, means that, hypothetically, God would have never created the world. Although the world is a "symptom" of the fall, he would have either acted in another way (certainly unthinkable by human beings and creatures) or even he might not have acted at all in any way. The meaning of this hypothesis (and, subsequently, the meaning of use of Past tense by Origen) is that there is not any timeless causality -not even one established by the will of God. Origen refers to the decision of God using terms clearly denoting that this creation is an event stemming from a God's *unique* decision, not by any causality whatsoever.

The question of probability of some "next" creation is indeed out of Origen's main interest as his thought is entirely preoccupied with this certain world throughout time. But if one by all means wants to find some allusions of Origen related to this question, then the conclusion should be that he believes that no other fall will occur as we prove in chapter 5, again through Origen's own words.

Thus the allegations of both Justinian and Jerome by which they attribute a notion of timeless causality to Origen are not only false but indeed Origen held exactly the opposite of what is attributed to him.

Hence the world was created by a unique benevolent decision of God. He is not a Creator because of any causality compelling him to create. God created *once* because he out of his goodness willed to do so.

This is why in Origen's thought the distinction between the of *God Himself* and *God as Creator* is so vital. The fundamental conviction of Origen that the world was made out of a free benevolent and *unique* decision of God plays an important part in that distinction. Thus, to say that God is a creator in Himself is a notion totally alien to Origen's authentic views.

Hence, due to fundamental presuppositions of his theology, Origen could have never applied to God any timeless causality of the kind discussed above; and, in fact, he did not. This is the deeper meaning of the above-mentioned distinction in the conception of God.

When Justinian and Jerome attribute to Origen the notion that corporeality emerges and dissolves into nothing intermittently, they do so because they also attribute to him the notion of a beginningless world. The former allegation is actually subsequent to the latter. For what they virtually imply is that there is an "eternal" world of individual and personal incorporeal souls, or minds, and this world may exist either in a mode of corporeality or incorporeality. In any case, this world is thought to be without beginning or end. What changes is the *mode* of its existence, not the existence itself as an "eternal" fact; and this mode of existence (that is existing in either corporeal or incorporeal form) depends on the moral status of these incorporeal rational minds, which are regarded without beginning or end.

But, as we have discussed in chapter 1, Origen's authentic views are far too alien from those above, which are falsely attributed to him.

The conclusion of this section is that Origen does not hold any notion of timeless causality neither does he regard the creation of the world as placed in a "causative scheme" of intermittent appearance or disappearance of bodily nature. To him there is *one* creation which came into being out of non-being out of *one* decision of God and it strives towards an absolute end -as we shall see in chapter 5.

### Conclusion

Origen employed the fundamental Stoic perception of time as an "extension" yet he treated it in a way appropriate to his own thought. The Stoics regarded time as a purely natural element and their affirmations about it are exclusively related to time as a part of natural reality. This way of treating time was understandably consequent on both their lack of any notion of transcendence and their materialism. Origen, however, did hold a notion of transcendence; besides, the notion of materiality applies not only to the visible firmament but also to other "worlds" which are material yet "not seen" due to the quality of their matter. He also held a notion of incorporeality applied to the divine being only. Not only the real existence of this incorporeality is not put in question but it is regarded as a reality of apparently higher quality. All these presuppositions fundamentally determine his conception of time.

Thus the categories which constitute the Stoic definition of time have in Origen's thought a quite different actual content. Time is indeed held to be a fundamentally natural reality. Yet there are also significant theological implications related to time itself.<sup>715</sup>

Whereas the Stoics spoke of simply of *extension*, Origen clearly defines the relation of this extension to space, by introducing the term *συμπαρατείνων* which in fact portrays the reality of space-time. The Stoic predication of time as *παράκοσμου* the movement of the world is discarded just because it does not exactly depict the relation of time to space and may be misleading (as indeed it was for some people) on the strict relation of time to space, namely as to whether time is "older" or "younger" than space. The terminology introduced by Origen excludes the possibility of such dilemmas.

Accordingly, the relation of this "extension" to the *world* has a

different meaning due to Origen's different conception of the "world". Time is a reality accompanying the entire world. It is related not only to what is "visible" but also to what is "not seen". Thus, although both the Stoics and Origen firmly relate time to the world, it is obvious that Origen's view is that time applies to a reality far more "broad" than the Stoic conception of what is the "world".

Origen affirms that everything in the world is *in time* yet it is only in letter that this expression appears to be the same to that of Zeno's in his definition of time. For the notion of being *in the world* and thus *in time* is in Origen's thought far too different from the Stoic views, due to the different actual content applied to the notion of the *world*.

In the same way, the category of *movement* related to time has a different content in Origen. Although natural motion (which is what the Stoics meant in their definition of time) is not neglected, this predication applied to the conception of time is mainly understood as *free moral action* in all the ranks of life of the world. And, whereas time is also regarded as a *criterion of fastness and slowness*,<sup>717</sup> in Origen's thought this predication is mainly applied to the *trial of free moral action* in time.

Besides, Origen regards time as a dimension. This term brings his conception near to Plotinus' affirmations about time yet there is no affinity of Origen's conception of time to any Platonic one. For time is not any sort of "moving image", it "was not at rest with the eternity in real being" where "it kept quiet" before is "moved" down to the world. Time came into being out of non-being and it did in no way exist before the creation of the world. In the Platonic view, time is portrayed as an "image" exactly because it is perceived as establishing a kind of *affinity* between the world and the Beyond. On the contrary, in Origen, time not only does not establish any affinity between divine life and the world

but furthermore it is regarded as an element in terms of which the radical *hiatus* between God and the world is portrayed. The perception of time as *dimension* (both etymologically and essentially) actually stems from its being regarded as an *extension*.

The Stoics did not regard time as a dimension of life because they mainly considered the natural character of cosmic motion and they did not have any eschatological ideas.

On the other hand, Plotinus contempts the notion of time as "extension". He grounds his arguments on the dialectics and the lack of elaboration of the Stoic definition.

Our view, however, is that the deeper argumentative mood of Plotinus arises rather from his contempt for materialism and from the fact that the Stoics determine time only in relation to the visible material world and their definition excludes any notion of transcendence, according to their fundamental philosophical convictions. In challenging the Stoic conception of time Plotinus quite rightly deems that this is a point for embarrassing the Stoics by challenging their view of what is "real" and, in the final analysis, challenging their materialism. In a way, he was not unsuccessful.

Origen is far from this kind of dispute as he held both a notion of *materiality* of the entire world and a notion of the divine *transcendence*. This is why he can use both Stoic and Neoplatonic predications and yet to apply to them a different actual content -- a content befitting his own thought. Thus he formed and established a conception of time, as well as a terminology for it, which has been employed by the Cappadocians (especially Basil of Caesarea) and vast number of later Christian writers.

In fact this conception of Origen is what Augustine picked up in order to form his theory of time. In the light of our discussion here, we think that Augustine's originality on the question of time has to be



thoroughly re-assessed. For what has been presented as his own contribution to a theory of time is but a repetition of Origen's original perceptions as well articulations. In regard to the points on which (for one reason or another) he has not been able to follow Origen's radical transformations of Neoplatonic notions, Augustine remained a mere echoer of substantial aspects Plotinus conception of time.

Accordingly, it is for his own purposes that Origen employs the notion of prolongation of time. In contrast to pagan thought, motion in space-time is not just a natural occurrence but it is a meaningful free moral action. There is nothing of the pessimism and despair of Marcus Aurelius' in Origen's thought. Time is not a "destroyer" but it is exactly a reality which is a source of consolation and hope in a world perceived as "being down" (καταβολή).

The notions of Judgement and Causality established in time underline a particular conception of it.

In *commGen* the reason of "faith" and "the advent of Christ" and "the whole dispensation through the law and the prophets and the toils of the apostles in order to establish the Churches of God through Christ" is grounded exactly on the fact that there will be a "Judgement by God". As it is pointed out there, *if Judgement is not established in time* then all those events have taken place "in vain"<sup>718</sup> and faith is futile, too. But in that event Origen's conception of time loses crucial characteristics of it to the extent that one has to speak of a *totally different* conception of time -it could not be *Origen's* conception of it.

For one thing, it is the conviction about the "impartiality" and "righteousness" of God -two predications of God which are regarded as "principles". For another thing, freedom constitutes an essential existential characteristic of rational creatures. Thus time is understood as a reality created by God for freedom to make sense, as creaturely freedom in absence of time can make no sense whatever. It is a reality

established in the world in order to "serve" rational beings, namely in order to render their freedom meaningful and their struggle for return to God hopeful.

So, although it cannot be sustained that the notion of Judgement and Causality pertain to the essence of time, it can be affirmed that they constitute fundamental characteristics of a particular conception of time. This means that if Judgement and Causality are disregarded or abolished, then what remains is *another* conception of time, which indeed would be very close to a Greek one. This is why Origen consciously contrasts his own ideas to the Greek ones, especially at points where misunderstandings are possible.

In fact this conception of time provides the basis on which Origen establishes his considerations about the process of the world and they play a crucial role in portraying certain functions in time which attribute to it a particular and unique *character*. This is the subject which we shall examine next.

### Chapter 3: The character of Time

#### **§1. Human being throughout an aeon.**

Following from the conceptions of judgement and causality, a rational creature remains in a certain rank of life for as long as one aeon at least. Changes of existential status take place only after a judgement which occurs at the end of an aeon. Whether in the subsequent aeon one will continue to live in the same rank of life or it will be transposed to another one, this is something determined only after a judgement. Thus, any transition from one rank of life to another is impossible at any other moment during an aeon apart from that which marks the end of it.

This conception, however, raises certain questions with respect to the existential status of a human being throughout an aeon.

Origen applies the term "soul" (ψυχή) only to the human rank of life<sup>1</sup> and regards soul as just a "part of the rational essence".<sup>2</sup> In doing so, he is fully conscious of the questions raised by this view. He articulates those questions in a passage of the *commJohn* which reads as follows:

"Before anything else, we should at another point enquire more diligently and to a larger extent the question about the essence of soul, the beginning of its constitution and its entering into the earthly body; and about the distribution of the life of each one of them and about its discharge from here and if is it contingent for soul to enter a body for a second time, either during the same aeon and the same world or not and either in the same body or not; and if [soul enters] in the same body [we should enquire] whether it is a subject remaining the same and it just changes its quality or it will be the same both as a subject and in quality; and [we should inquire] whether [soul] will always use the same

body or it will change it. Among these questions, a main one which should be enquired of is: what is transmigration (μετεσώματῳσις) in itself and what is the difference between it and embodiment (ἐσώματῳσις), and whether a consequence of holding transmigration is to hold that the world is incorruptible. Among these it is also necessary to expound the opinions of those who hold that it is according to the scriptures that soul is sown together with body and what follows from that. And, in one word, the doctrine about soul needs a particular treatise because it is a doctrine great and difficult to interpret<sup>3</sup> as it needs to be selected and compiled from passages here and there in the scriptures."<sup>4</sup>

**Origen and the doctrine of transmigration.** To reject the doctrine of transmigration is among the fundamental convictions of Origen and he explicates his opinion in *commMatt* where he comments on Matt. 17,10-13 as follows:

"At that point I think that by *Elias* it is not Elias' soul which is meant; [I think this] in order not to fall in the doctrine of transmigration which is alien to the church and it is neither given by the apostles nor does it appear anywhere in the scriptures;"<sup>5</sup> In the same work he speaks of "the false doctrine of transmigration"<sup>6</sup> whereas in another work he affirms that the "doctrine of transmigration" is "rejected as false".<sup>7</sup>

In *Cels* he refers to those who "have suffered harm caused by the foolish doctrine of re-incarnation, taught by the physicians who degrade the rational creature sometimes to an entirely irrational animal, sometimes to that which is capable of perception."<sup>8</sup> He also refers to the Jews, the Egyptians and the Pythagoreans who hold "the myth about the soul's re-incarnation"<sup>9</sup> and states that "we do not hold the doctrine of transmigration of the soul and its fall even to irrational animals."<sup>10</sup> Thus, on this subject, Origen is not only opposed

to the Greeks "who introduce the notion of transmigration",<sup>11</sup> but also to the Jews "who held the doctrine of transmigration to be true and hereditary and not alien to their mystical teaching."<sup>12</sup>

Origen's attitude towards the question of transmigration of soul is one more point on which his thought is contrasted to the Platonic perceptions. For the Platonists held that soul is a "being" living in itself as an incorporeal hypostasis and it may be "imprisoned" in a body or to be out of any body at any time. This means that a soul would "go out" of a human body after a man's death and to "enter" into another body at any time after that death. This means that during a period of time determined by Origen as "one aeon" a Platonist could assert that a soul may enter into another body for a second time after a man's death.

Origen, however, is opposed to the Platonic dualistic conception of "soul-body" since he does not regard soul as an incorporeal being living in itself apart from a body. Besides, he holds that a rational creature may change a rank of life only at the end of an aeon after divine judgement. This is the ground on which argues against any notion of soul's entering into another body during the same aeon. On this subject he deploys a series of deductive arguments which may be rendered thus:

If one supposes that, in the period from the beginning of this world until the consummation, a soul would enter a body for a *second* time, then there is no reason not to assume that a soul may, in the same period, enter a body for a *third* time and even more. In fact this is held by those who believe that re-embodiment is the way by which soul is punished for its sins and this is how it may be purified.<sup>13</sup> But if this process goes on, then it should be assumed that soul will always be incarnated because of its former sin. Therefore there will be no consummation of the world during which "the heaven and the earth will pass away."<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, someone would say that soul a will be

re-incarnated until it be purified and after an "so to speak, infinite number of years"<sup>15</sup> it will need no further re-incarnation. It would also be sustained that, in this way, one soul after another will be purified; and, since the number of souls is finite<sup>16</sup> there will be a time that no soul will need incarnation and, subsequently, the material world will be destroyed because there will be no soul in need of incarnation. But, as Origen points out, this is contrary to what the Holy Scripture say. For it is said there that, at the time of consummation, there will be plenty of sinners in the world, as Jesus himself said "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?".<sup>17</sup>

So Origen to develops his arguments on the question on the basis of two premises. First, there will be a time at which the world will be consummated. Secondly, at that moment there will be plenty of sinners in the world.

The possibilities which he considers then are the following:

1. Consummation of the world will be followed by punishment. In that case there are two likelihoods, namely either punishment *in another body* or punishment *out of any body* at all. Considering this, Origen challenges the potential proponents of this view to explain what the "causes" and the "differences" in this conception of punishment are.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless this is a purely hypothetical case employed by Origen just for the completeness of his dialectical exposition. This is why he does not elaborate on the expressions "in another body" or "out of any body". The case is not actually related to the Greeks (to whom Origen refers later on; s. *infra*): The classical Platonic perception of transmigration is certainly out; for to Platonists there is no notion of consummation of the world; they regard the world as everlasting and metempsychosis takes place at any time, namely it is not related to any "consummation" of the world. On the other hand, the Stoics held the doctrine of recurrence; but they held the successive worlds to be

identical. At any rate, in Stoic thought there is no notion of retribution of sins.

2. There will be no punishment at all, since all sinners are supposed to be purified "at once" (αθρόως) at the very moment of consummation.<sup>19</sup>

3. The third is in fact Origen's own view of how justice about perpetration of sins is done: He affirms that there might be a way of punishment according to which creatures will live *in bodies* and yet *outside* this life, according to their merits.<sup>20</sup> It is obvious that he alludes to his conception of existential causality in a prolonged time.

His conclusion is that "to those who can see" each one of the above-mentioned possibilities of retribution "is refutative of transmigration" (ἐκάστων δέ τούτων ... ανατρεπτικόν ἐστὶ τῆς μετενσωματώσεως); and "retribution of sins will not take place in the form of transmigration" (ἐστὶ δέ ἡ τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων εἰσπραξις οὐκ ἐν μετενσωματώσει).<sup>21</sup>

The above stated arguments are directed against those who accept that there will be a "consummation" of the world. Yet there are "the Greeks who postulate the doctrine of transmigration of souls and hold that the world will not be destroyed, following from their hypothesis."<sup>22</sup>

It is significant that the arguments of Origen against the doctrine of transmigration are largely based on his fundamental view of the beginninglessness of the world and his attitude towards the notion of the Infinite. It is then worth while to consider this argumentation, since in the final analysis, it indicates Origen's conception of time in a way which we are going to discuss later on.

He rejects the Greek assertions about non-consummation of the world on the ground of his Christian attitude that the existence of the world has a certain meaning as it comes to a dialectical relation to

God. More particularly, it is Origen's view of time as the means where God's will and creaturely will encounter each other that prove the world as finite. If the world were infinite there would be no foreknowledge; and this, not because (as it has falsely been attributed to Origen) God *cannot* comprehend whatever is infinite, but because in that case "foreknowledge" simply does not make any sense. If the world is infinite in terms of duration,<sup>23</sup> any notion of *before* makes no sense at all. This is why one could not speak of *fore*-knowledge; and if there is no foreknowledge it follows that neither *prophecy* can make sense, exactly because the notion of *end* of the world would make no sense either.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, there are two notions directly involved with Origen's conception of time on the grounds of which he rejects the doctrine of transmigration:

First, the finite duration of the world, in term of both beginning and end.

Second, time is not a morally indifferent continuum in which action takes place without any meaning or significance; but it is where action has a purpose, it is directed towards an end which means that free moral action is meaningful exactly due to its being judged in the light of its eschatological perspective.

**The distinction between soul and spirit.** Nevertheless Origen has a passage of Luke before him, namely the Luke, 1, 16-17, which says: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias".<sup>25</sup> In order to explain this passage, he distinguishes between "soul" on the one hand, and "spirit and power" on the other. So he comments on the above-mentioned passage of Luke stating:

"And note that he did not say *in soul of Helias* so that a doctrine of re-incarnation would be grounded, but *in the spirit and*



*power of Helias."*<sup>26</sup>

Accordingly, in his *homLuc* he states: "For John was not Elias in actuality, as those who hold the doctrine of transmigration say, alleging that the soul of Elias came in John. For he does not say 'in the soul of Elias' -because it was not a transmigration- but he says 'in the spirit and power of Elias.'<sup>27</sup> For there was spirit and power upon Elias, that is a spiritual gift as it happened to each one of the prophets. This spirit, which was in Elias, was bestowed upon John."<sup>28</sup>

It is again on the Scripture that Origen grounds this distinction as he states: "It is clear that the Scripture knows a difference of spirit from soul" and he adduces passages such as the I Thess.5,23<sup>29</sup> and Dan.3,86<sup>30</sup> which "denote the difference between spirit and soul."<sup>31</sup>

In *commJohn* he quotes John 1,21 ("And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not") saying that this passage "will be used by those who believe in transmigration and [hold] that soul is clothed in different bodies having no memory at all of the previous lives",<sup>32</sup> but a man who thinks according to the right doctrines of the Church should reject such an interpretation because it is not said about the soul of Elias but about the spirit and power,<sup>33</sup> for it is possible to prove from numerous passages in the Scripture that the spirit is something different from the soul."<sup>34</sup> Therefore, "there is nothing absurd in saying that John has come in the spirit and power of Elias."<sup>35</sup> Hence "John is said to be Elias not because of his soul, but because of his spirit and power; and there is nothing contrary to the teaching of the Church if it is said that they (sc. the spirit and power) formerly were in Elias and then were bestowed on John; for "spirits" "of prophets are subjected to prophets",<sup>36</sup> but souls of prophets are not subjected to prophets; and also "the spirit of Elias is resting in Elissaeo",<sup>37</sup> particularly emphasizing that what was in Elissaeo was the

"spirit" and "not the soul" of Elias.<sup>38</sup>

Origen goes further with his distinction between soul and spirit by juxtaposing various passages of the Scripture referring either to the soul or the spirit. His conclusion is that soul is a "means" (μέσος) which is susceptible of either virtue or evil whereas spirit of man is not susceptible of anything bad.<sup>39</sup> He furthermore asserts that "it is possible that many spirits exist within a man, not only worse but also better ones"<sup>40</sup> and regards as clear that the spirit of God existing within a man is different from the spirit of man himself.<sup>41</sup> So, having adduced various passages from the Scripture, he concludes that it is possible to hold that more than one better spirits exist within a man<sup>42</sup> and also many "powers" may exist within one man.<sup>43</sup>

The way in which Origen makes the distinction between "soul" and "spirit and power" is not entirely a systematic one. We can however compile his views from various points of his theology when he refers to this subject, as it is mainly the above-mentioned passage in Luke 1,17, where he originates his enquiry on the question. To him it is enough that he can reject the notion of transmigration by providing an exegesis entirely based on the Scripture. According to the his mystical doctrine of the fall, the origin of soul is in the divine reality. As we shall discuss in chapter 5, this reality is also soul's final destination. As, therefore, the origin as well as the destination of soul are related to the mystical doctrine of the fall, it should be not surprising that Origen avoids developing his views on the subject systematically. He does not, nevertheless, fail to explicate the contrast of his doctrine to that of Plato as he did with other non-Christian thinkers. Thus he just rejects transmigration and all he says about his own views is that they comprise "a different and more sublime view" than that of Plato:

"If he (sc. Celsus) had understood what follows upon a soul when it will be in the eternal life (τί ακολουθεῖ τῇ ψυχῇ ἐν αἰωνίῳ εἰσομένῃ

ζωή) and what is the right view of its essence and origin, he would not have ridiculed in this way the idea of an immortal (αθάνατον) entering a mortal body, not according to Plato's transmigration but according to a different a more sublime view."<sup>44</sup>

Thus Origen's view is that a human soul does not enter another body during the same aeon. The question, therefore, raised by this affirmation is: what happens to the soul after the death of a man and until the consummation of the aeon?

**Human being throughout an aeon.** The answer which Origen provides is consistent with his fundamental view that corporeality is a universal characteristic of creatures, regardless of the rank of life in the world. Indeed, his assertion is that, after death, the soul uses a body which has the same "form" to that during the lifetime. In the *Res* we find his view that "before the resurrection" and after its "separation" from the body "soul makes use of body"<sup>45</sup> which is "of the same shape to the thick and earthly body"; for whenever "there is a narration of appearance of one of the dead, he has been seen in a shape which is the same to that which he had when he was in flesh".<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, when it said that "Samuel was appearing, that is, he was visible, it entails that he was clothed with a body".<sup>47</sup>

Thus Origen holds that, after death, the soul has also a human body which is consisted of a matter of another quality.

This very affirmation, namely that after death the soul is in the body, provides Origen with one more argument against transmigration. He subsequently argues that "it is not possible" for Elias' soul to be in John's body "because one soul cannot function into two bodies at the same time";<sup>48</sup> for "once [Elias] was ascended together with a body, how this soul which had a body was transposed to another body?".<sup>49</sup> This is why "it was not the ascended Elias who had come having changed body [and] named as John".<sup>50</sup>

What Origen reaffirms is not only that after death human beings are "alive"<sup>51</sup> but also his views about corporeality, as discussed in chapter 1. Throughout an aeon a human being has a *human* body and what is different from the earthly life is the quality of this human body. In Origen's view this should not be regarded as strange; for a human body changes not only after death but is actually changes every day; "this is why not mistakenly body has been named as a river".<sup>52</sup> Thus "it is necessary for a soul, existing in spatial places, to use bodies which are appropriate to those places. And if it were necessary for us to live within sea as sea-creatures we would have a body similar to that of fishes, so when we are likely to inherit the kingdom of heaven and being in different places, it is necessary that we use bodies which are spiritual, the former shape, nevertheless not being extinguished even though the transformation becomes towards a more glorious form; this is what Jesus' body was like (as well as that of Moses' and Helias'), namely, during the metamorphosis it was not different from what it (sc. Jesus' body) normally was (ὡςπερ ἦν τὸ Ἰησοῦ εἶδος ... οὐχ ἕτερον ἐν τῇ μεταμορφώσει, παρ' ὃ ἦν)."<sup>53</sup> What is suggested here is that the body of Jesus, during his metamorphosis, was transformed into a "more glorious form"; however, it was the *same* body somehow transformed -it was not *another* body. This remark applies also to the bodies of Moses and Elias, who were present during the event of the metamorphosis of Jesus.

The very significant conclusion, which Origen articulates after this analysis, is that there is no question of disputing the personal identity of a human being because of his changing quality of body during an aeon.<sup>54</sup>

This is a view according to which he can answer any question about the status of a human being throughout an entire aeon. For, as a lifetime is too short a period of time compared to the duration of an

aeon, one would ask the question not only of the status of a human being *after* his death, but also about this status *before* birth. Indeed, Origen provides an answer to such a question in *Cels*:

"...we know that when a soul, which is in its nature incorporeal and invisible, is in any material place, it requires a body suited to the nature of that environment. In the first place, it bears this body after it has put off the former body which was necessary at first but which is now superfluous in its second state. In the second place, it puts a body on top of that which it possessed formerly, because it needs a better garment for the purer, ethereal, and heavenly regions. When it came to be born into this world, it put off the afterbirth, which was useful for its formation in the womb of the mother so long as it was within it; and underneath that it put on what was necessary for one that was about to live on earth. Then again, since there is an earthly house of the tabernacle, which is somehow necessary to the tabernacle,<sup>55</sup> the Bible says that the earthly house of the tabernacle is being dissolved, and that the tabernacle puts on 'a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens'. The men of God say that 'that which is corruptible shall put on incorruptibility', which is different from that which is incorruptible, and that 'that which is mortal shall put on immortality',<sup>56</sup> which is not the same as that which is immortal.'<sup>57</sup>

This is how Origen portrays human being in body throughout an aeon. It is the very fact that a rational creature is an inseparable corporeal entity living in a world which is material, which entails that the soul should always be understood as being in a body.

E. de Faye<sup>58</sup> has taken the view that the statements in Latin<sup>59</sup> according to which it is only the Trinity who lives without a body are but interpolations of Rufinus. In the light of the discussion here, this assertion is not correct. Origen had strong as well as clear views of corporeality. This is why he argues against those who might assert

that it is possible for a soul after death to be punished without being in a body.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, Origen's comment on the passage of Matthew "but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"<sup>61</sup> is quite indicative of his fundamental views of corporeality. He takes the view that what this passage of Matthew suggests is that "the incorporeal soul is not punished without a body" (ὅτι ἀσώματος ἡ ψυχὴ, καὶ ὅτι ἀνευ σώματος οὐ κοῤῃάζεται).<sup>62</sup> In any event, "soul is in need of a body for its spatial transpositions" (σώματος δέεται διὰ τὰς τοπικὰς μεταβάσεις).<sup>63</sup>

On this question, H. Crouzel is right in withdrawing an earlier view of his affirming that the soul lives in a body in the time between human death and what he calls "resurrection".<sup>64</sup> There are two things, however, that have eluded his analyses in that work. First, Origen's perception about corporeality pertains not only to that period of time but also to the time *before* the birth of a man. Secondly, a human being does not actually *change* body after death.<sup>65</sup> A human being actually has *two bodies* and the visible one is portrayed as being "under" the unseen human body. It is only during the formation of a human being into the "womb of the mother so long as it was within it" that he does not wear this not seen (and yet human) body.<sup>66</sup>

It would be interesting (yet beyond our scope here) to discuss how modern physics has made progress towards detecting (and indeed photographing) what Origen regarded as a body *under* which the visible human body is. We only note this: Modern research has shown that the "brightness" of human body is particularly high when a human being is in certain existential states (praying, for example, is one of these states). It is not without significance that Origen, more than seventeen centuries ago, articulated the affirmation that "the prophets ... because of the touch, so to speak, of the Holy Spirit upon their souls ... became more clear-sighted in their mind and *brighter* not only in their soul

but also *in their body* (εχίνοντο καί τήν ψυχὴν λαμπρότεροι ἀλλὰ καί τό σῶμα).<sup>67</sup>

What is significant, however, is not so much how Origen depicts the state of bodily nature. After all one might allege that this cannot be detected at all and reject all assertions about the opposite. But what is most significant is that Origen postulates that soul always has a body, namely that soul *must* always have a body. And this "must" directly stems from his conception of rational creatures (and here, man) as an inseparable entity. So, what should be seen beyond these affirmations of Origen is a certain mode of perception of creaturely life, which is in stark contrast to the Platonic perception.

This way of thinking has profoundly influenced the research of modern science. A great number of the sub-atomic particles of matter have been first visualized and later verified. Physical theory postulated that they *must* exist, according to fundamental theoretical assumptions. In fact many of them were later actually detected. Even today, the "quarks" are *hypothetical* particles which are assumed to exist due to theoretical presuppositions.

Therefore, what Origen's affirmations (about soul always being in a body) demonstrate is his deeper conception of human being as an inseparable entity and his thorough rejection of any Platonic notion about souls constituting living persons and capable of living without any body at all.

Origen is clear in stating this fundamental existential connexion between "being in the world" and "having a body". In the passage above, the participle "τυγχάνουσα" (being in) is a causative one, as it indicates the cause why soul needs a body -and this cause is that soul is "in every corporeal place".<sup>68</sup> A little further he highlights this connexion again, stating that "we need a body for various purposes *because* we are in a material place and indeed a body which is of the same nature

as the *nature* of the corporeal place and we put on the tabernacle *because* we are in need of a body".<sup>69</sup>

Origen, therefore, is absolutely faithful to his view discussed in chapter 1, namely that "life" in the world is understood as life of an inseparable entity of incorporeal and corporeal nature and by no means the incorporeal could be considered as living in itself without any body at all. Besides, it is his very view of the whole world as material, where "corporeality" actually means "spatiality", that makes him say that "a soul ... is in need of a body for its spatial transitions".<sup>70</sup>

As for the *place* in which human beings live after death and "before the consummation of the aeon",<sup>71</sup> there is an answer, too. In *Res* there is a comment on the parable of the rich and Lazarus<sup>72</sup> stating that Lazarus was resting "in the bosom of Abraham",<sup>73</sup> by this meaning "to be together with Christ".<sup>74</sup> In *Cels* Origen provides a more detailed view on *where* human soul exists after death until the consummation of an aeon:

"Moreover, not only Christians and Jews, but also many other Greeks and barbarians have believed that the human soul lives and exists after separation from the body, and show this by the doctrine that the pure soul, which is not weighed down by the leaden weights of evil,<sup>75</sup> is carried on high to the regions of the purer and ethereal bodies, forsaking the gross bodies on earth and the pollutions attaching to them; whereas the bad soul, that is dragged down to earth by its sins and has not even the power to make a recovery, is carried here and roams about, in some cases at tombs where also apparitions of shadowy souls have been seen,<sup>76</sup> in other cases simply round about the earth."<sup>77</sup>

This is the sense in which Origen states that "After death the soul does not exist in this life".<sup>78</sup> The way in which he articulates how man exists after death denotes his two notions about what will happen thereafter. Until the end of the aeon, human being takes his "award"



according to his merits and his existential status is still a human one in a body of a quality that he deserves to be until judgement. However, it is only at the time of judgement, that a man "collects the harvest", that is another existential status in the aeon to come - if he is found to deserve a transposition at all.

Origen depicts extensively these two categories of "award" and "collection of the harvest" in *commJohn*.<sup>79</sup> He obviously does so in order to reiterate his fundamental view that "human beings" maintain this rank of life "until the consummation of the aeon".<sup>80</sup>

During this period of time, a human being "saved in Christ" (οἱ ἐν Χριστῷ σωζόμενοι) are not superior to "angels", due to the very fact that they are still human beings.<sup>81</sup> Those who "are now merciful" (οἱ νῦν ἐλεήμονες) will become "angels" in "the aeon to come"<sup>82</sup> and it is then that they may be sent a "angels" to help human beings to attain to eternal life.<sup>83</sup>

It is particularly noteworthy that Origen states that to believe that this "alteration" (μεταβολή)<sup>84</sup> may take place "before the consummation of the aeon" (πρὸ τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος)<sup>85</sup> is an opinion held by those who "have not grasped the meaning of the scripture and long for impossible things".<sup>86</sup> For whatever the "award" from God will be, this will be given in the "aeon to come" (ἐν δέ τῳ μέλλοντι αἰῶνι ἢ παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου διανομή).<sup>87</sup>

Nevertheless, there is a further question which should be raised with respect to Origen's views of "motion" in time, as discussed in chapter 2. He holds that movement of rational beings in time, mainly regarded as free moral action, is perpetual as "there is nothing between to commit sin and not to commit sin".<sup>88</sup> The question, therefore, is what happens to this *movement* in the interim, namely between death and consummation of an aeon.

Origen is conscious of this question which directly stems from

his fundamental premises -and he does face it. Thus, in *commMatt* he comments on the parable as in Matt.20,1-16: "If the soul has been sown together with the body, how did they remain idle during the whole day?"<sup>89</sup> His exegesis is that the expression "out of the vineyard", where the workers were before they were "hired", "is the place of the souls before this body"<sup>90</sup> whereas "vineyard" is not only this life but also the place where the souls will be after death; "for the souls which are out of the body do not stand idle" as "Samuel was working by prophecying being out of the body, and Jeremiah was praying 'for his people':"<sup>91</sup> He holds that we should work in the vineyard 'whether present or absent',<sup>92</sup> "for no one will be sent in the vineyard (according to the parable) in order not to work".<sup>93</sup> Accordingly, in *deOr* he states that "in a place of prayer", among those standing with the faithful, there are those "who have fallen asleep before us"; "And if Paul while still clothed with a body held that it cooperated with his spirit in Corinth,"<sup>94</sup> we must not give up the belief that so also the blessed ones who have departed come in the spirit more quickly than he who is in the body to the assemblies of the Church."<sup>95</sup>

Therefore, Origen regards those who have departed from this life as being in a sort of activity until the consummation of the aeon. Consequent on his conviction that a living being is an inseparable whole, he holds that the "whole" which is said to be "spirit, soul, body, will be judged" at the time of "the presence" of Christ.<sup>96</sup>

**Conclusion.** Origen provides answers to the questions raised by his conception of time so that he remains faithful to his fundamental conception of it. He decisively rejects the doctrine of transmigration, held by the Greeks, Jews and Egyptians and he upholds his views, as a Christian, so that basic points of his conception of time are reiterated and reinforced. He reaffirms his views on corporeality, his opinion that the world had a beginning and is directed towards an end and this

direction has an purposeful character underlined by the judgement at the end of an aeon. He also reiterates that a living rational creature (in this case: human beings) is a "whole", namely an inseparable entity having spirit, soul and also having always a body, although the quality of matter which constitutes this body changes. Finally, Origen reiterates his conception of creaturely movement as signifying mainly free moral action; he regards human beings after death as existing in bodies and being in activity and he offers prophecy and prayer as examples of such activity. Those examples are quite characteristic, as they particularly underline that movement in Origen's space-time is not a purposeless one, but it is oriented towards an end; in this way the eschatological character of action of human beings in time is identified.

## **§2. Time and the incarnation of Christ.**

**The perpetual advent of the Logos.** Following from his conception of the relation of the Logos to the world, Origen regards the presence and function of the Logos in the whole of time, "not only the future ... but also in the past."<sup>97</sup> This means that the "advent" of the Logos in the world takes place as long as it exists, from its beginning to its end. On this subject Origen states:

"According to the narrated presence of our Lord Jesus Christ an advent of his has taken place, which was corporeally universal<sup>98</sup> and shone there upon the world, when 'the Logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us'.<sup>99</sup> For 'he was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.'<sup>100</sup> One should know, nevertheless, that the Logos was also coming to each of the saints before (his incarnation), though not in a corporeal form; and he is still coming to us even after his visible advent".<sup>101</sup>

In the *commJohn* it is accordingly stated: "Before the corporeal advent of Jesus the saints had something more than the other faithful, as they had comprehended the mysteries of divinity; for it was the Logos of God who had taught them before he became flesh (for he was always working, being imitator of his father, about whom he says 'My father is hitherto working';<sup>102</sup> and those saints "were instructed by Christ before he became flesh", Christ "who was begotten before the Lucifer".<sup>103</sup> So "there is not when" the Logos was not "present in the life, either after the historical era of Jesus or before it."<sup>104</sup>

In the Fragment XIX of the same work, Origen comments on John1,29 ("Behold the Lamb of God, which bears and takes away the sin of the world") as follows: "It has been well said 'he who bears and takes away the sin' not >he who bore and took< or >he who will bear and take away<. For he perpetually carries out the bearing and taking away the sin of those who seek refuge to him. Hence we hold that he bore and took away and bears and takes and will bear and take as 'to bear and take' is applied to each time."<sup>105</sup>

Accordingly, in *Ce/s*, Origen states: "God in his goodness comes down to men not spatially but in his providence and the son of God was not only with his disciples at that particular time, but also he is with them always (αἰῶ), in fulfilment of his promise 'Lo, I am with you all the days until the end of the aeon'.<sup>106</sup> Also "the Logos is established as the Logos of God and Jesus is proved to be son of God both before and after his incarnation. But I affirm that even after his incarnation he is always found to be most divine in character by people who have very sharp eyes in their soul, and to have truly descended to us from God, and not to have owed his origin or development to human sagacity but to God's manifestation; for it was he who by varied wisdom and various miracles established Judaism in the first place, and later Christianity."<sup>107</sup> So God wants "to enable us to become familiar with

him through Christ and the perpetual advent of the Logos".<sup>108</sup>

Thus Origen holds the doctrine of the "spiritual advent" of the Logos<sup>109</sup> as a perpetual manifestation of God in the world. Therefore, the term "presence" of the Logos may suggest either his "spiritual advent" before the incarnation or the corporeal presence of Christ in the world or his presence thereafter or even "the prominent and glorious" presence of Christ expected in the consummation of the world.<sup>110</sup>

This view is the background for an exegesis of a passage in Luke 2,6 ("the days were accomplished that she should be delivered"):

"To many people it would seem superfluous to say '[Now Elisabeth's] full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son'. For who is that woman who can bring forth a son unless the time of incubation is complete? ... And one should know this, namely that in the case of John it has been written 'Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered',<sup>111</sup> whereas of Mary [it has been written] 'the days were accomplished'.<sup>112</sup> For [the expressions] 'the days were accomplished' and 'full time came' are not all the same, as time has also nights, but in the case of Jesus there are no nights but only days to be accomplished that he be brought forth."<sup>113</sup>

What Origen implies here is that the actual presence of Christ did not take place "after" a time elapsed, but, at a certain historical moment, this presence was manifested in time in a corporeal form. For what came was "he who was destined to bring peace in the world, he who establishes a contact between heavens and earth".<sup>114</sup> The incarnation of Christ "is a genesis not as a road from non-being into being" but it is "a road from 'being in the form of God'<sup>115</sup> to undertake the 'form of a servant'".<sup>116</sup>

Nevertheless, Origen deems the doctrine of incarnation a mystical one<sup>117</sup> and as a "mystery" in itself,<sup>118</sup> which constitutes a

manifestation of the love of God towards creatures.<sup>119</sup> He also states that incarnation took place so that "man who had gone away" be saved<sup>120</sup> and in order to make men "friends" of God.<sup>121</sup> So the incarnation was not "in vain";<sup>122</sup> for it is through this event that the transcendent God became "approachable" to men,<sup>123</sup> since, departing from humanity which Christ assumed at that time, one may become a man of God.<sup>124</sup>

The character of incarnation as a historical event is clearly pointed out.<sup>125</sup> Origen is particularly scrupulous in enunciating that the incarnation was a real event and not a "seeming" one<sup>126</sup> and so was the passion of Jesus.<sup>127</sup> The term "death" applied to Christ is referred to his human hypostasis,<sup>128</sup> because Christ did not stop being God during the time of his incarnation.<sup>129</sup>

Origen portrays the reason of incarnation as well as the relation of his divinity to his soul.<sup>130</sup> It is very significant that, even in referring to Christ, Origen remains consistent with his fundamental view of human nature as a "whole" and not something compound in a Platonic, or other, sense. Although he states that neither the body nor the soul of Christ were God,<sup>131</sup> yet he regards them as being "one" with the Logos of God during the incarnation.<sup>132</sup> It is again in the above-mentioned passage from *commMatt* that he regards the soul and body of Jesus as being "one" with the Logos of God, so that "all this is one whole".<sup>133</sup>

Origen's view is that the advent of Christ is being continued even after his incarnation and resurrection. Thus, "as before his visible and corporeal incarnation he had descended to the perfect, so [he does] after his proclaimed presence".<sup>134</sup> He holds a notion of the Logos as one who "returned from incarnation to what 'he was in the beginning with God'",<sup>135</sup> and who thereafter "is being served not of men nor by men"<sup>136</sup> but he "goes to the souls which have prepared themselves to receive

him".<sup>137</sup>

Thus Christ was incarnated according to the divine dispensation and yet he continues to be present; for "everything passes away, but those (sc. the commandments) do not. And neither does the Logos; for if he "falls into the ground", he falls willingly in order "to bring forth much fruit".<sup>138</sup>

Origen fully affirms the historical reality of the incarnation of Christ in the person of Jesus. Nevertheless he does not hold that this incarnation took place so that the presence of the Logos become more "concrete", as it were, and therefore in a sense "compelling" men to admit it. On the contrary, his view is that the incarnation took place in order to provide an orientation of freedom towards salvation -and yet leaving this freedom completely intact.<sup>139</sup> This is why he regards the term "gospel" (ευαγγέλιον) as pertaining only to the New and not to the Old Testament. As he explains, the word of Christ is to men an ευαγγέλιον only "once they accept those which are announced",<sup>140</sup> that is, only if this word is accepted by human freedom.

Origen would have never asserted that the incarnation took place so that Christ appears in a sort of more "concrete" reality, so that men are forced to believe. The presuppositions required to accept the Logos of God are the same whether he is incarnated or not. These presuppositions constitute a process of personal preparation through free moral action.<sup>141</sup> If these presuppositions do not exist, then a man cannot apprehend the Logos, even if he sees him incarnated in time. On this Origen states:

"In order to see sensible things, there is nothing acting but a healthy eye which, once directed towards a point, sees, whether it wants to see or not. But divine things are not of such a nature as, at present, they cannot be seen without their own action". Not only God himself, but even an "angel, as long as he does not want to be seen, he

is not seen although present. ... This is how things should be apprehended in the case of Christ". One should not think that "all those who saw were seeing Christ. They saw the body of Christ, but they were not seeing Christ as Christ is in himself. For he was seen only by those who deserved to see his magnitude. This was also promised by the scripture which says "for he is found by those who do not put him to the test and he appears to those who are not unfaithful to him".<sup>142</sup>

So, "although Jesus was one, he had many aspects; and he did not appear uniformly to all those who saw him";<sup>143</sup> "not even with the apostles themselves and the disciples was he always present or always apparent, because they were unable to receive perpetually his divinity. After he had accomplished the work of his incarnation, his divinity was more brilliant."<sup>144</sup> "Accordingly, the scripture, in which all is done by divine appointment, recorded that before his passion Jesus appeared quite generally to the crowds, although even this he did not do all the time; but that after his passion he no longer appeared in the same way, but with deliberate care measured out to each individual that which was right. Just as it is recorded that God appeared to Abraham or to one of the saints,<sup>145</sup> and that his appearance was not unbroken but only at intervals, and just as he did not appear to all, so also I think that the son of God appeared in much the same way to the apostles as God appeared to the saints in the Old Testament."<sup>146</sup>

Christ "was sent into the world not only to become known, but also to conceal himself. For his whole nature was not known even to the people who knew him, but some part of him escaped them; and to some he was entirely unknown."<sup>147</sup> And Origen reiterates his view later in the same work stating that Christ's "human characteristics were visible to all, while the divine characteristics could not be seen by all".<sup>148</sup>

Therefore, whether during the incarnated presence or in the perpetual incorporeal advent, the internal presuppositions of man to



"see" the Logos of God are exactly the same. The fact of Christ's advent to each individual man remains; it is up to the human being to prepare himself properly and apprehend this fact. It is according to this perception that Origen states: "And we should know that the advent of Logos occurs to those who enjoy the most of blessing. For what is my personal benefit if the Logos has come to the world but I do not have him? and, by contrast, even if we suppose that the advent of Logos had not yet taken place and I would become as the prophets became, then I have the Logos."<sup>149</sup>

Origen considers the doctrine of the Church to be that the incarnation of Christ was the "*fulfilment* of the *promise*" which had been announced by the prophets.<sup>150</sup> On the question as to why the advent became corporeal, although it would be possible to continue being incorporeal (since the presuppositions of "seeing" him are exactly the same) Origen provides answers as stated above. Christ was incarnated because it was promised by God. It was an act of God's providence for the sake of the entire world. Nevertheless the very fact that incarnation took place and the time at which this happened are in God's choice, according to his providence. It is not possible to men to know the very reasons of God's action nor can men know why these actions take place at that specific time. This is a fundamental view of Origen and it is subsequent to his view of God's radical transcendence.<sup>151</sup>

**The consummation of *aeons*.** In Origen's view the historical moment of Incarnation marks a certain fixed point in the continuum of the whole time. This "point" is one of prominent significance, exceeding even the significance of those points which mark the "consummation" and "end" of an aeon.

The ground for holding a particular view about the significance of the incarnation of Christ is to be found, as Origen deems, in the Scripture, namely in Paul. It is the passage from Heb. 9,26 "but now

once in the end of the aeons hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" as well the passage from I Cor. 10,11 "and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the aeons have come". What Origen concludes from these two passages is that there are some other fixed points in the continuum of time, apart from those which mark the end of each aeon; these are the points which mark the "end of aeons", that is the end of a period of time which comprises a number of aeons -a number which Origen does not determine and implies that he does not know.<sup>152</sup>

In the *commMatth* he states that as at the end of an aeon "certain occurrences"<sup>153</sup> happen (destruction of the world, consummation, judgement, rearrangement of rational creatures in the various ranks of life), so at the "end" of a set of aeons the event of Incarnation took place. Origen is remarkably cautious in the articulation of his views on this subject. In contrast to the end of an aeon which is constantly marked by the same essential characteristics (consummation, judgement, re-arrangement of rational beings in the ranks of life), the "end of aeons" is not marked by occurrences which are supposed to be always of the same nature. It is on this ground that he regards the incarnation of Christ as an event which marks the "end" of an undetermined number of aeons and the "beginning" of a next series of aeons of an undetermined number, too. In the *deOr* he articulates this view thus:

"I think that, as the last month is the end of the year, after which the beginning of another month ensues, so it may be that, since several ages complete as it were a year of ages, the present age is 'the end', after which certain 'ages to come' will ensue, of which the age to come is the beginning, and in these coming ages God will 'show the riches of his grace in kindness'; when the greatest sinner, who has spoken ill of the Holy Spirit<sup>154</sup> and is under the power of sin throughout

the present age, will, I know not how (οὐκ οἶδα ὥτως οἰκονομησόμενον), undergo treatment from beginning to end in the ensuing age that is to come."<sup>155</sup>

**The uniqueness of the incarnation of Christ.** A question raised by Origen's conception of time is this: Since time is understood to consist of aeons marked by consummations of the world, how is it possible for rational creatures to know the word of God in an aeon hereafter? Does such a conception of time entail that Christ should again be incarnated in order to reveal the word of God to the world?

Origen's answer to this question is negative. The advent of Christ does not mean that he "changed place" but just that "he became visible whereas he formerly was not. Being invisible, due to his being image of the invisible God, he assumed the form of a servant; thus the Logos became flesh and thus visible, so that, through his appearance, he might instruct us to see his glory through his visible appearance".<sup>156</sup> It is due to his doctrine of the perpetual relation of the invisible Logos to the world that Origen has no difficulty in affirming the *uniqueness* of his appearance into the world in an incarnated form.

Thus it was not only through his visible presence that the Logos communicated with the world and revealed the word of God. He is perpetually acting as a mediator between creatures and God. The incarnation of Christ is a "mystery" and "it is difficult to know the mystery of incarnation in all its particulars".<sup>157</sup> Nevertheless this "mystery ... has been prepared" by the providence of God even "before the foundation of the world" and the incarnation of Christ is like "bread which descended from heavens and gave life to the world".<sup>158</sup> This means that Christ was incarnated not because there was no other way for the Logos to reveal the truth to the world, but because God himself appointed this way for his own manifestation into the world. It is not possible to know why God acted in this way. It was an act out of his

Providence and men cannot know the reasons of providence.<sup>159</sup>

This is the context in which Origen regards the crucifixion of Christ as a "sacrifice" which took place "once".<sup>160</sup> He directly appeals to Paul and quotes the passage from Rom.6,10 "For in that he died, he died unto sin once;"<sup>161</sup> and remains faithful to the *ἀνάξ* as in Heb.9,26.

It is thus, namely as a manifestation of the divine *οικονομία* "prepared before the foundation of the world", that Origen underlines the uniqueness of the incarnation of Christ. He states that the "genesis of Jesus Christ"<sup>162</sup> is as unique an event as the "genesis of men"<sup>163</sup> and the "genesis of heavens and earth".<sup>164</sup>

The incarnation is a historical occurrence which is unprecedented since creation came into being. This is why Jesus is stated as he who "came out of God"<sup>165</sup> whereas "before that he did not will to go out of the father".<sup>166</sup> In view of this, Origen refers to God who "made *one* special descent in order to convert those whom the divine scripture mystically calls 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel',<sup>167</sup> which had strayed down from the mountains".<sup>168</sup>

Furthermore, the incarnation took place not just once, but also *once and for all*. This means that this event is unique not only with respect to the *past* but also to the *future*. Origen asserts that the saying in Revelation that "he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood" (Rev.19,13) denotes the blood of the incarnated Logos; and he adds that even if we in some future time ascend to the highest rank of life, we shall never forget the entrance of the Logos into a body like that of ours.<sup>169</sup> Thus the uniqueness of the incarnation is regarded with respect to the eschatological perspectives, as portrayed in John's Revelation.

The event of incarnation is regarded as *one* certain point in the whole stretch of time, between the beginning and the end of the world. It is a unique event having a decisive eschatological purpose.<sup>170</sup> So this

is a unique "kairos" (a notion discussed later in this chapter) in the whole *oikonomia* of God about the world:

"It is not surprising that there have been prophets who in certain generations on account of their more active and zealous life surpassed other prophets in their reception of the divine inspiration, some of whom were their contemporaries while others lived earlier and later than they. So also it is not surprising that it has happened at a certain time (*καιρός*) that some special person has visited the human race, who was pre-eminent beyond those who lived before or even after him. The explanation of this has something rather mysterious and profound about it, the understanding of which is quite beyond the capacity of the common people. To explain these matters, and to reply to Celsus' question about Christ's advent 'Is it only now after such a long age that God has remembered to honour'<sup>171</sup> the human race? Did he not care before?' it is necessary to touch on the subject of divisions, and to explain why 'when the most High divided the nations as he scattered the sons of Adam, he set the boundaries of the nations according to the number of the angels of God; and the Lord's portion was Jacob his people, Israel the lot of his inheritance.'<sup>172</sup> And it will be necessary in each case to give the reason for the birth of a man into a particular region as the subject of the one who has been assigned that region, and how is it reasonable that 'the Lord's portion was Jacob his people, Israel the lot of his inheritance'. We must explain why formerly 'the Lord's portion was Jacob his people, Israel the lot of his inheritance', whereas concerning the later dispensation the Father said to the Saviour, 'Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the bounds of the earth for thy possession.' (Ps.2,8). For there are logical and consistent reasons for the different ways in which providence cares for human souls which cannot be expressed or explained in detail.

Accordingly, even if Celsus will not admit it, after many prophets who were reformers of the old Israel, *Christ came as reformer of the whole world*.<sup>173</sup> He did not need to punish men by the method of the earlier dispensation, with whips and bonds and tortures. For when 'the sower went forth to sow',<sup>174</sup> his teaching was enough to sow the word everywhere. But if there will be a certain fixed time when the world will be brought to the end which it must necessarily have since it had a beginning, and if it is true that, after that, a righteous judgement of all,<sup>175</sup> then anyone who constructs a Christian philosophy will need to argue the truth of his doctrines with proofs of all kinds, taken both from the divine scriptures and from rational arguments".<sup>176</sup> So the answer of Origen to the argument of Celsus is that God "has always cared for the reformation of the rational beings and given to them opportunities of virtue" and "there is no time when God did not want to justify the life of men".<sup>177</sup>

On the same question Origen states further in the same work:

"We observed earlier that it was not as if God had risen up from long slumber when he sent Jesus to the human race; although now, for reasonable causes, he has accomplished the dispensation of his incarnation,<sup>178</sup> he has always (αἰῖ) been doing good to mankind. For nothing good has happened among men without the divine Logos who has visited the souls of those who are able, even if but for a short time, to receive these operations of the divine Logos. Moreover, though the advent of Jesus was apparently in one corner, it was quite reasonable; since it was necessary that the one prophesied should visit those who had learnt that there was one God, and who were reading his prophets and learning of the Christ they preached, and that he should come at the proper time (ἐν καιρῷ) when the doctrine would be poured forth from one corner all over the world".<sup>179</sup> This because "the divine scriptures, which understand the sleepless nature of God, teach us that God

dispenses the affairs of the world in the appropriate times (κατά καιρούς), as reason demands".<sup>180</sup>

So Origen holds that the incarnation of the Logos, the "day" of Jesus [as in John,8,56], marks the fulfilment of the divine promise, which was announced by the prophets, as the incarnated Logos was the same one who had descended to the prophets.<sup>181</sup>

In *Cels*, when he attacks the doctrine of recurrence of identical worlds and calls it as "ludicrous"<sup>182</sup> one of the arguments he adduces against this doctrine is that this would entail the the incarnation of Christ would be considered as having happened already in the past or that it will happen again in the future for an infinite number of times.<sup>183</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that Origen strongly holds that the incarnation of Christ took place not just "once" but also once and for all.

Hence, E. Molland is wrong in alleging that Origen "cannot answer"<sup>184</sup> the question of whether or not the incarnation of Christ was a unique event. For Origen did answer this question and indeed in the most strong and clear terms.

In view of this, we assert that the allegation of Jerome, as stated in the following passage, is totally groundless; for he says: "your Origen allows himself to assert that Christ has often suffered and will often suffer, on the ground that what was beneficial once will be beneficial always".<sup>185</sup>

What exists in the *Princ* with respect to this question is a text in the Second Book, which is extant only in the Latin rendering and reads as follows:

"This world, however, which in itself is called an 'age' (Wis. 13,9) is said to be the end of many ages. Now the holy apostle teaches that Christ did not suffer in the age that was before this, nor yet in

the age before that; and I do not know whether it is in my power to enumerate all the previous ages in which he did not suffer. I will, however, quote the statements of Paul from which I have arrived at this point of knowledge. He says: 'But now once at the consummation of the ages has he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself' (Heb.9,26). He says that Christ has become a 'sacrifice' once, and that 'at the consummation of the ages he has been manifested to put away sin' ".<sup>185</sup>

Even if one asserts that this passage does not render the authentic views of Origen exactly still there is nothing in it which would entail that Origen holds that Incarnation will be repeated. On the contrary, as he does in his works preserved in Greek, he again quotes the crucial passage of Paul from Heb.9,26, where the *ἐφ' ἁνάξ* of the incarnation of Christ is stated.<sup>187</sup> This persistent recourse of Origen to a passage of Paul's, which is pivotal for the subject discussed, reflects his authentic views as found in the passages in Greek, where he explicitly affirms the uniqueness of the incarnation of Christ.<sup>188</sup>

What Origen holds is that at the "consummation of aeons" which occurred during the present aeon, God "willed"<sup>189</sup> "to reveal himself" and as a "measure of revelation"<sup>190</sup> he "willed to send a divine teacher to mankind".<sup>191</sup> It is exactly in the passage above from *frLuc* that Origen looks very conscious of the meaning of the Past tense, as he explicitly comments on it and all his expressions about the "will" and "act" of God towards incarnation are in the Past tense, which denotes an action which *once* took place in the past.

Taking Origen's scrupulous treatment of language into account, we should note that the expression *σωματοποιήσαι θελήσας* (he who *willed* to assume a body)<sup>192</sup> denotes his view of the uniqueness of Incarnation, as both the terms are in the Past tense denoting an action that took place once in the past. If Origen held that this event had taken



place more than once in the past (that is, if he held that incarnation takes place in each "consummation of aeons") he would use those verbs in Imperfect tense, which denotes an enduring action in the past; or he would use Present tense, in order to indicate an assumed "periodical" or "repeated" incarnation of the Logos. For example, in *Cels*, he alludes to his notion that "assuming" a "body" "in accordance with one's merits" is an occurrence which takes place constantly at the consummation of an aeon; and it is certainly not accidental that here he uses the verbs in the Present tense (δίδωσιν, αναλαμβάνόντων) in order to denote that this is something *always* happening at the end of an aeon,<sup>193</sup> whereas, in the same sentence, he states that God "willed" this occurrence to be normally established, using Past tense in order to imply that this "eternal law"<sup>194</sup> was established *once* God *willed* so.

Speaking of the Incarnation, however, Origen uses his language in a way clearly denoting that this event took place "once" (ἀπαξ).

In reply to Celsus' allegations, Origen argues: "Or are you allowed to give a defence of the fact that God is not always (μὴ αἰὶ) appearing to the Hebrew race, while we are not granted the same right in the case of Jesus? For he once (ἀπαξ) both rose again and convinced his disciples about his resurrection, and convinced them to such an extent that they show to all men by their sufferings that they are looking for eternal life and for the resurrection which has been exemplified (υποδειχμένην) before them in word and deed, and that they deride all the troubles of life."<sup>195</sup>

Accordingly, in *commJohn*, Origen speaks of Christ saying that "he offered the *unique* (ἀπαξ) sacrifice by offering himself, not only for the sake of man but for the sake of all rational creatures (οὐχ υπὲρ ἀνθρώπων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ παντός λογικοῦ τὴν ἀπαξ θυσίαν προσενεχθείσαν εαυτὸν προσενεγκών)". He argues that "it could be absurd" (καὶ γὰρ ἄτονον) to claim that it was only for the human sins

that Christ "tasted death", as in Heb. 2,9. For in that biblical passage it is stated that Christ "tasted death *ὑπὲρ πάντων*", namely "for the sake of everyone", which means that he tasted death not only for the sake of human beings. The conclusion from this argumentation is that Jesus "died not only for the sake of men, but also for the sake of the rest of rational creatures (*οὐ μόνον ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων ἀπέθανεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν λογικῶν ὁσίων*)."<sup>196</sup>

In the Fragment 3B I of the "Commentary on Matthew" (quoting Matt.3,2), it is stated that the "kingdom" [of heaven] indicates the "presence" of Christ, both the "former" and the "last" one.<sup>197</sup>

Certainly it is not coincidental that Origen more than once appeals to the passage where Paul enunciates the uniqueness of Incarnation; and it is also not coincidental that although he speaks of "years" and "consummations" "of aeons" he nowhere makes the slightest hint of a potential past or future incarnation of the Logos. On the contrary, he stresses the uniqueness of the event. Referring to the end of an aeon, he calls the occurrences of that time as "eternal law" (s. *supra*) and portrays the meaning of consummation, the causes of it as well as the content and the outcome of judgement; he does so in a detailed way and he calls them also as "heavenly and spiritual laws" which exist "for salvation" and "for the service to God".<sup>198</sup>

Juxtaposing this concreteness of Origen on the question of the consummation of an aeon to the way he expresses his views on the "consummation of aeons", we assert that the difference is not incidental. He emphasizes the uniqueness of Incarnation and as for the other "consummations" "of aeons" he just says that "something should be done"<sup>199</sup> but it is only God "who knows the times of revealing and the measures of revelation".<sup>200</sup>

Thus, although Origen holds a notion of a prolonged time comprising consecutive aeons and does not altogether exclude the

possibility for recurrence of one event or another<sup>201</sup> he is clearly affirming that the incarnation of Christ is a unique event throughout the whole of time; and the uniqueness of this event has granted time a certain meaning in both directions, namely past and future. It is, therefore, of particular significance to enquire in the meaning which time acquires out of the incarnation of Christ.

**Incarnation and Time.** Origen, with his characteristic acuity, makes a perceptive remark on the meaning of the term εὐαγγέλιον (gospel). Since the term εὐαγγέλιον has the meaning of an "announcement of things" which gladden those who hear them "once they accept what is announced"<sup>202</sup> then one would say that this definition applies to the Old Testament as well; and yet the term εὐαγγέλιον is not applied there.<sup>203</sup> Origen's concern for logic and precision appears here once more, as he does not hesitate to challenge his own statements in order to ground them in the most solid way.

The answer that he provides to this question is based exactly on the event of the incarnation of the Logos.

"It would seem to someone reasonable to object to the first term (sc. the term εὐαγγέλιον) because these writings which are not named as gospels can be included in the same definition; for the law and the prophetic words are believed to contain announcement of things which reasonably gladden those who hear them because of the benefit to them once they accept what is announced. To this it would be answered that, before the [visible] advent of Christ, the law and the prophets did not have themselves what was being promised, because he had not come yet in order to elucidate the mysteries; but once the saviour came and willed to present the euangelion as a corporeal one, made everything like an εὐαγγέλιον<sup>204</sup> ... by taking away the veil which was on the law and the prophets, proved the divinity of all of them, as he apparently realized, to those who wanted to become disciples of his wisdom, what

the true things are in the law of Moses, which were venerated by the ancient people 'in figure and shadow'<sup>205</sup> and what the truth is of the events in that history (sc. in the Old Testament), which 'to them was happening in figure, yet it was written'<sup>206</sup> for us, to whom the end of the aeons has arrived. For everyone to whom Christ has come, does not worship God either in Jerusalem or in the mountain of the Samaritans; but learning that 'God is spirit' [and] adoring him 'in spirit and in truth'<sup>207</sup> worship the father and creator of everything not in figure any more (οὐκέτι). Thus, none of the old writings before the gospel was εὐαγγέλιον; for it (sc. the gospel) became εὐαγγέλιον because of the advent of Christ. And the εὐαγγέλιον, which is a new testament, once took us away from the antiquity (παλαιότητος) of that letter, bestowed the light of knowledge to all the writings and illuminated them by the newness of the spirit, which never becomes old; this newness of the spirit applies to the new testament. For it was necessary par excellence (ἐξαιρέτως) to call as εὐαγγέλιον this which *realizes* (ποιητικόν) what in the Old Testament was regarded as gladdening news (εχρήν δέ τό ποιητικόν τοῦ καί ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ διαθήκῃ νομιζομένου εὐαγγελίου εὐαγγέλιον ἐξαιρέτως καλεῖσθαι 'εὐαγγέλιον' ...<sup>208</sup>

Thus the pre-announcements in the Old Testament, about the future advent of Christ, certainly were gladdening news. However, the term εὐαγγέλιον applies only to what contains the *realization* of those promises and announcements -and this is the New Testament.

In respect of this, the scripture of the law and the prophets was incomplete (πεπληρωμένη οὐκ ἦν) in the sense that he who said "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to complete (συμπληρῶσαι)"<sup>209</sup> was not present in that scripture.<sup>210</sup>

The passage above shows how Origen comprehends the meaning which the incarnation of the Logos gave to time before that event.

Incarnation "made clear" the "mysteries" of Old Testament, where there was a "promise" but it was expressed in a secret way, as a fact pertaining to future time. Those writings though cannot be named as εὐαγγέλιον; for there was not "what was promised" in itself (that is Christ) as he appears "being corporeal" in the New Testament. This "presence" took away the veil from the words of the law and prophets and proved those words to be really inspired by God. It was therefore the "promise" in itself, secretly expressed in the Old Testament, that became corporeal. This is why the term εὐαγγέλιον applies "par excellence" (εξαιρετικῶς) to what "realizes" (ποιητικόν) the message of the Old Testament.

So history *before* this event is proven to have had an eschatological character, as it was orientated towards the advent of Christ; the evolution of history was directed by the *promise* given by God and, subsequently, the *expectation* and *hope* for this event to occur, once it had been *prophesied*. Those categories in italics constitute fundamental characteristics of Origen's conception of time in respect of the incarnation of the Logos. Thus in *Cel* he states:

"But are you not moved by the commendations of the supreme God and his holy angels, uttered through prophets not after Jesus' life but *before* he came to live among men, so that you admire both the prophets who received divine inspiration and the one whom they *pre-announced* ? It so happened that his advent to this life was proclaimed many years beforehand by several men in such a way that the whole Jewish race was hanging on the *expectation* of him whom they *hoped* would come."<sup>211</sup>

This is the sense, in which Origen regards John the Baptist and his preaching as an "end" and Jesus Christ as a "beginning".<sup>212</sup> This "beginning" though, apart from its temporal sense, has also a qualitative one, meaning the enlightenment and renewal of time

thereafter.<sup>213</sup>

This is why Origen, in the beginning of his exegesis on the Psalms, adopts those definitions of the term "end" (τέλος) that better fit his theology and express his thought in the most effective way. Thus he appeals to Aristotle to define "end" (τέλος) as what "is the cause of the others not being in itself the result of anything "; or "end" is that "because of which the others exist, in itself existing not because of them"; or "end" is that "for which everything is done, and do this not everything else". Accordingly, he appeals to Herophilus, according to whom "end is a predicate because of which we do everything else, and do it itself not because of anything else; and goal is the respective [predicate] to this, in the same sense that true happiness (ευδαιμονία) is [respective] to be truly happy; and this [sc. goal] is the ultimate of choices."<sup>214</sup>

Thus the incarnation of Christ as a "beginning" is understood in both a temporal as well a qualitative sense. In *se/Ps* this view is expressed in a single passage, as Christ is stated as he who "has altered himself by undertaking the form of a servant, because of whom we began to live according to the New Testament and are preparing ourselves to begin the termination of the figures and the beginning of the truth itself "<sup>215</sup>

Origen quotes the passage of John 2,19 "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" and, with his usual scrupulousness, he makes a very acute remark upon that:

"For it is not written 'Destroy this temple and in the third day I will raise it up', but 'in three days'. For the temple \*\*\* is raised in the first and the second day after its destruction and his raising up is completed in three days in all. This is why resurrection has taken place and there will be resurrection, even though we are buried with Christ we also are resurrected together with him."<sup>216</sup>

What this passage shows is that time acquires a new meaning *after* the incarnation of the Logos.

Free moral action is reinforced by the *hope* and *expectation* of resurrection, which has truly and vividly been realized in history by Christ himself. The historical event of incarnation gave a clear meaning to *future* time as well as to the way in which the walk towards this goal will be realized. In *commJohn* Origen states:

"Well, according to a certain exegesis, both the temple and the body of Christ seem to me to be a figure of the church; she is the 'temple', a spiritual house, 'a holy priesthood'<sup>217</sup> due to the fact that she is built by living stones and founded 'Upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone'.<sup>218</sup> And by the saying 'Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular',<sup>219</sup> even though the harmony of the temple seems to be either dissolved or all the bones of Christ [seem to be] scattered,<sup>220</sup> as it is written in the Psalm 21, in persecutions and sorrows due to plots by those who fight against the unity of the temple; yet the temple will be raised up and the body will be resurrected on a day which will be the third after the day that evil was against it and [after] the ensuing day of the consummation; for there will be a third [day] in the new heaven and the new earth,<sup>221</sup> when those bones, the whole house of Israel,<sup>222</sup> will be resurrected as death will be defeated<sup>223</sup> on the great [day] of the Lord. Thus the resurrection of Christ, which took place after his passion on the cross, contains a mystery of the resurrection of the whole body of Christ. And as that sensible body has been crucified and buried and after that it has been raised up, so the whole body of Christ [constituted] of saints has been 'crucified with'<sup>224</sup> him and is not alive at the moment; for each one, like Paul, glories for nothing else but 'in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ',<sup>225</sup> through whom he has been crucified to the world and the

world to him. So he has not only been crucified together with Christ and crucified to the world, but he is also buried together with Christ; for, he says 'we are buried with him',<sup>226</sup> and Paul like being in a kind of betrothal to resurrection makes the remark 'We have been resurrected with him',<sup>227</sup> for he walks in a renewal of life, in the same way as during the hoped for blessed and perfect resurrection, although he has not been resurrected yet. Therefore, although he is now either crucified and after that buried or now buried and resurrected from the [death of] the cross, there will be a time when he will be resurrected due to the very fact that he is now buried."<sup>228</sup>

Thus "walking" in time is advancing towards the "hoped" for resurrection; and time acquired this meaning after the incarnation of Christ. It is because of this meaning that Origen regards the Church as the place for progressing towards salvation and also considers the "temple"<sup>229</sup> as well as the "body" of Christ as "prefigurations" of the Church.<sup>230</sup> This is also why<sup>231</sup> he interprets the construction of the temple of Solomon as pertaining to the Church: "We shall try to apply everything which there is referred to the temple, to the Church".<sup>232</sup>

Throughout the theology of Origen there are many points which show that he regards the Church as being the "place" for salvation.<sup>233</sup>

As the meaning of "salvation" is the "return to God", this return has been realized in history, as "resurrection". This is a matter though, which is regarded as a "great mystery"<sup>234</sup> and "hard to speculate" on. Such an opinion is not unexpected, since the resurrection is closely related to the conception of the fall, namely, resurrection constitutes the "restoration" from the fallen state.<sup>235</sup>

This is why, very characteristically and with his usual scrutiny, Origen calls the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the "exemplified" (υποδειγμαμένην)<sup>236</sup> one. His "death and resurrection" have already established a "prefiguration" (προτύπωσιν)<sup>237</sup> of the



resurrection the entirety of the world, as those who follow him in "his death" will also be like him "in the resurrection" (τὴν μετὰ τὸ σάββατον ἀνάπαυσιν τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν αὐτοῦ ἐμποιοῦντος τοὺς συμμόρφους τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ γεγενημένοις καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως).<sup>238</sup>

The real meaning which future time acquired after the incarnation of Christ is established by the fact that "he staged the resurrection of the dead through his own resurrection".<sup>239</sup> This was a historical event which established the validity of the promise of Christ to his disciples that they will be resurrected, too.<sup>240</sup> It is also in the Fragment 553 of the Commentary on Matthew that he again affirms that the death and resurrection of Christ was also a figure of the resurrection of all.<sup>241</sup>

In view of these affirmations, there is no doubt that the passage referring to "resurrection, the figure of which was shown in our Lord and Saviour",<sup>242</sup> although extant only in Latin, does express Origen's authentic views.

So Origen regards incarnation as a "mystery" which was in the providence of God "before the foundation of the world"; this was realized in the proper time appointed by God himself, at a moment which marks the consummation of a number of aeons. This very event gave time a new meaning, as creatures in time are thereafter regarded as being in a kind of "betrothal" (ἐν ἀρραβώνι) to the reality of the "end".<sup>243</sup> This means that, in a deeper sense, *future* became *present*. For in the person of Jesus the final end was fully realized; the resurrection of Jesus was a first *fulfilment* of the *promise* of God, given through Jesus, about the final resurrection of the entire world.

The future became present not only for the resurrected Jesus himself, but also for everyone who believes in God through Christ. This is why Origen refers that Paul "became in a kind of betrothal to

resurrection" and he walks as if he were already resurrected, although he is not resurrected yet. In the *se/Ps* Origen speaks of time after the resurrection of Christ in a really triumphant manner, not because of what history *will be* but because of what history already *became*:

"What that day will be like, on which reconciliation of God to men took place, and a lasting war was suspended, and the earth was proved to be heaven, and the unworthy men of the earth appeared worthy of the kingdom, and the beginning of our nature was elevated above the heavens (ὑπεράνω τῶν οὐρανῶν), and paradise opened and we received back our ancient fatherland, and the curse was extinguished and sin was forgiven? He certainly created all the days, yet he made that one par excellence (εξαιρέτως); for it was on that day that he realized the supreme mysteries befitting him. Hence let us rejoice and be overjoyed on that day, enjoying a double joy and feast; one, because we were emancipated from the captivity of the devil; and a second, because we are elevated to the kingdom of heavens."<sup>244</sup>

The cause for this joy is that "he who is going to bring peace in the world has arrived, namely he who establishes a link between heaven and earth transforms earth into heaven through the preaching of the gospel".<sup>245</sup>

Origen's view that "the former carry in themselves figures of the latter"<sup>246</sup> means that Incarnation illuminated the sayings in Old Testament.<sup>247</sup> It is according to this view that he defines prophecy as "foretelling of future things; and when they are accomplished then the saying reaches its end".<sup>248</sup> The passion and resurrection of Christ is a "prefiguration" of what will happen to the "body" of the Church. "For Christ is the 'head of the church', so that Christ and church are one body".<sup>249</sup>

In fact, the advent of Christ as a *promise*<sup>250</sup> of God, marks the fulfilment, the "*answer*" of him who is *expected* to those who *expect*

him".<sup>251</sup> Because what came was he who "would establish peace in the *future* and reconcile heavens to the earth and *transform earth itself into heaven* through his preaching."<sup>252</sup> Thus this historical event establishes a springboard for the future process of history. How Origen regards this "beginning" is stated in a passage in *Cels*:

"Both Jesus himself and his disciples did not want people who came to them to believe only in his divine nature and miracles, as though he did not share in human nature and had not assumed the human flesh which lusts 'against the spirit';<sup>253</sup> but as a result of their *faith*, they also saw the power that descended into human nature and human limitations, and which assumed a human body, combined with the divine characteristics, *to bring salvation to believers*. For Christians see that, with Jesus, human and divine nature *began* to be woven together, so that, by fellowship with divinity, human nature *might become* divine, not only in Jesus, but also in all those who believe and go on to undertake the life which Jesus taught, *the life which leads* everyone who lives according to Jesus' commandments to friendship with God and fellowship with Jesus."<sup>254</sup>

The expressions in italics indicate the character of time assumed after the incarnation of Christ. He was incarnated so that those who have "exercised their freedom towards accepting" the word of the prophets will hereafter "be given the paternal inheritance".<sup>255</sup> The incarnation of Christ marks the moment of history at which "we *began* to live according to the New Testament" which means that we "are preparing ourselves *to begin the termination of the figures and the beginning of the truth itself*".<sup>256</sup> It is Origen's view that once the incarnation of the Logos took place, we know the meaning of movement in time thereafter; we also learned that the resurrection was an "exemplified" prefiguration of the resurrection of the entire "body" of Christ,<sup>257</sup> at the end.

This is how Origen portrays the fact that an expected eschatological reality has *begun to be realized* and in a sense it is already *present* in history. In view of this, when Gregory of Nyssa<sup>258</sup> suggests that the real cosmic and historical significance of the salvation lies in the fact of Christ's true incarnation, he actually echoes the views expressed by Origen.

Thus, the incarnation and resurrection was something with a twofold meaning in respect of the direction in time. First, it was an event by which God himself showed the road to salvation. Secondly, this final end was presented into history not as a prophetic speculation, but as a concrete historical event. It is exactly this historical event which staged the end in the present as a concrete historical reality and it subsequently enables all men to experience, through faith, this *future* at the *present* time.

It is out of this *realization* and *promise* that the word of the incarnated Logos is called as εὐαγγέλιον. Explaining the etymology of the term<sup>259</sup> Origen points out that what is announced is "the saving advent of Jesus Christ". So "to those who want to accept it" and "to him who *believes*", this εὐαγγέλιον "teaches the advent of the good father in the son". Thus "the good" which is "*promised*" by these books, is what constitutes our *expectation*".<sup>260</sup>

Hence the incarnation of the Logos has orientated time towards the end as he *realized* this end and its actual content and *promised* this to those who would follow the road suggested. The resurrection of Jesus orientated action in time, namely it illuminated and "exemplified" its ultimate perspectives; thus *hope* and *expectation* became more intense, since the *promise* given by Jesus was already *realized* in his person as an "example" "both in word and deed" of what *will* happen at the *end*.<sup>261</sup>

Hence, "movement" (that is, free moral action) in Origen's time

is decisively orientated by *hope*. This category characterizes fundamentally his conception of time. Movement is regarded vis-à-vis a goal - "the hoped blessed and perfect resurrection".<sup>252</sup> The path towards this goal certainly presupposes the proper moral action; yet God can reinforce this action through his grace, which is perpetual in time since perpetual is the presence of the Logos even "after his declared presence".<sup>253</sup> Thus, time is coloured by "incessant grace" and "perpetual hope" and accordingly, in the *se/Lev*, Origen refers to "the incessancy of grace and the constancy of hope" (τό διηνεκές τῆς χάριτος καί τό ἀμάραντον τῆς ἐλπίδος).<sup>254</sup> Time has now a new orientation towards a goal which was both promised and "exemplified"<sup>255</sup> in history. Now the dialectical relation between God and rational creatures is more clearly underlined by God's grace and creatures' hope. This is why Origen regards a pious man to be acting "in this aeon, yet he strives looking forward to the aeon to come".<sup>256</sup> After the incarnation "we who have been familiar with Christ *expect* (ἠποδοκῶμεν) to receive our reward",<sup>257</sup> since now there are "God's reciprocal *promises* which are being *expected*" (καί τῶν ἐπιζομένων ἀμοιβαίων ἐπαγγελιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ).<sup>258</sup> Therefore Christ offers a consolation "through *the hopes of the future*" (ταῖς ἐλπίσι τοῦ μέλλοντος)<sup>259</sup> and man's course in history is enlightened and directed by *faith*. To such a conception of faith Origen devotes extensive analyses<sup>270</sup> in order to portray the intense eschatological character that movement in time has acquired once God manifested himself in history through Jesus and *hope* and *expectation* were established in time.

Following the allegorical exegesis of the "in three days"<sup>271</sup> Origen considers that, in spite of the fact that "the present aeon is night"<sup>272</sup> and a period of "distress and hardship and suffering and pain"<sup>273</sup> and "to the just this aeon is a winter",<sup>274</sup> it is nevertheless the incarnation of the Logos that granted time an orientation towards the

future and made this time meaningful by establishing a *hope* which enlightens the meaning of time until the very end of it.

In the *se/Ps* Origen quotes Psalm 36,7 ("fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.") as follows:

"He says not to imitate a prosperity made of wickedness; nor let yourself be provoked towards evil, even if you see someone evil prospering; for you should think that this aeon belongs to those who have no other hope. Let them be happy in this aeon and let them have what they regard as goods. We though look forward to another aeon of life; and our hope is in that aeon onwards. It is not possible to have the goods both in this aeon and in that aeon; for if someone have in this aeon, there he will hear, while being punished: 'Thou in thy lifetime didst receive thy good things'."<sup>275</sup>

Accordingly, he comments on Ps.36,8 ("fret not yourself in any wise to do evil" (Μή παραζήλου ὥστε νονηρεύεσθαι) thus:

"Do not keep your attention upon their prosperity; but wait for the *end* and you shall see their destruction".<sup>276</sup>

In the same work, the exegesis of Ps.61,6 is this: "He says, I do see many evils afflicted by them; but I am looking towards God and it is himself that I have as *expectation* and *hope*; this is why I withstand those which occur to me now".<sup>277</sup>

This *hope*, which orientates Origen's thought towards the future, arises from the Gospel, namely from the incarnation of the Logos, regarded as an event which rendered time meaningful, as it enlightened the direction of the entire world towards a *future* final goal.

Thus, in Origen's view, the Incarnation is a unique event which enlightens time before it. By their fulfilment, the prophecies not only acquired meaning, but also the "promise" appeared corporeally in the

the world and what will happen at the end was realized in history. So incarnation, as a historical event, gave a meaning to both past and future time.

**The eternal gospel.** It is out of this assessment that Origen considers the gospel as containing "a figure and a shadow of heavenly things".<sup>278</sup> This affirmation is quite a significant element, which helps comprehend Origen's conception of the incarnation of the Logos with respect to time as well as his conception of time in general.

In *se/Lev* he states that the Scripture is a whole comprising a "body", namely the letter of the narration, a "soul" of this "body" and the "spirit" which is "according to figures and a shadow of heavenly things".<sup>279</sup>

The prophecies in the Old Testament determined a direction in time towards the coming of Messiah; the incarnation of the Logos shows the direction towards the final end, that is the resurrection. It is very interesting to note Origen's allegory of the Scripture as comprising (like a human being) a body, soul and spirit; and it was understood as "body" by those before Incarnation, it is understood as "soul" thereafter and as "spirit" by those who will inherit the eternal life.

Thus, the gospel contains a figurative description of the eschatological reality -and it is in view of this that Origen understands what John in the Revelation (14,6) calls as "eternal gospel". The relation of the gospel to the "eternal" one is similar to the relation of the "mysteries" of the Old Testament to what has been revealed through the New Testament.<sup>280</sup>

Consequent on this notion, Origen makes the "conceptual" (τῇ νομοίᾳ)<sup>281</sup> distinction between "sensible gospel" and "intelligible and spiritual gospel". Therefore "all the struggle is to try to reach the depth of the evangelic mind and to enquire into the naked-of-figures truth (τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ γυμνὴν τύπων ἀλήθειαν), which exists in it."<sup>282</sup>

It is quite characteristic of the eschatological character of Origen's thought that he is preoccupied with portraying the meaning and cruciality of *future* time. To him Incarnation has illuminated the meaning of history until the end of time itself; in *se/Eze* he states that the "end" as "apokatastasis" constitutes the final reality which has already been intimated through "prophecy".<sup>283</sup>

By contrast, Origen does not seem particularly interested in dealing much with the *whole* of time before incarnation; he mainly deals with the time ever since the pronouncement of the prophecies in the Old Testament. It should be noted nevertheless that Origen seems to deem that the time of the Old Testament is extended in a period of time comprising more than one aeon. When he grounds his notion of "aeons" on the Old Testament, he states the flood of Noah<sup>284</sup> as well as the destruction of Sodom as narrations which indicate "consummations" of the world. This means that the narration in the Old Testament relates not only to events of the current aeon, but at least to events of two previous aeons -one of which was consummated by flood and the other by conflagration.

A question which would be posed in relation to time in the Old Testament is whether or not this time is extended to the past until the beginning of time itself. Such a question could be invited by points of the *Princ* such as "God did not begin to work for the first time when he made this visible world".<sup>285</sup> However, in chapter 1 we have already argued that Origen regards the narration in Genesis as pertaining to the very beginning of the creative act of God. Thus the "days" of Genesis are stated as indicating no time.<sup>286</sup> Besides, it is to passages in Genesis that Origen appeals in order to ground his notion of providential and actual creation, as we have seen.<sup>287</sup>

As regards the Incarnation, there are points where Origen deems that it is the time from the prophecies onwards that has been



illuminated by that event.<sup>288</sup> In another passage he affirms that "the just" and the "prophets" lived in a length of time which is extended in six aeons before the incarnation of Christ,<sup>289</sup> yet it would be asserted that this affirmation of Origen is rooted rather in purposes of his allegorical exegesis; for he relates this view to an exegesis of "sabbatism" (that is the rest on the seventh day) as meaning "rest and termination of committing sin".<sup>290</sup> Elsewhere he states that the "ecclesiastical state" "emerged" "at the time" of Abraham.<sup>291</sup>

Accordingly, in *de Or.* Origen states: "Therefore he who sees these things and perceives in his mind a week of ages so that he may contemplate a holy sabbath rest,<sup>292</sup> and a month of ages, that he may see the holy new moon of God, and a year of ages, that he may understand the feasts of the year, when 'all the males' must appear before 'the Lord God'<sup>293</sup> and the years proportioned to so large a number of ages, that he may comprehend the holy seventh year, and the seven weeks of ages, that he may sing the praises of him who has laid down laws so great."<sup>294</sup>

This exegesis, however, although completely consistent with Origen's conception of time, should be regarded rather as one adopted for the sake of interpretation, since Origen himself, in the same work, makes a general remark upon temporal terms found here and there in the Scripture:

"And we have to consider if the words written of feasts or solemn assemblies that take place according to 'days' or 'months' or 'seasons' or 'years'<sup>295</sup> are to be referred to aeons. For if 'the law' has a 'shadow of the things to come'<sup>296</sup> it must needs be that the many sabbaths are a 'shadow' of so many days and that the new moons come round in intervals of time, being the result of some moon or other with a certain sun. Now if the 'first month' and the 'tenth' day 'until the fourteenth' and the feast of unleavened bread from 'the fourteenth until

the one and twentieth<sup>297</sup> contain 'a shadow of things to come'<sup>298</sup> 'who is wise'<sup>299</sup> and so great 'a friend' toward God<sup>300</sup> as to perceive the 'first' of many months, and the 'tenth day' of it, and so forth? What ought I to say of the feast of the 'seven weeks'<sup>301</sup> and of 'the seventh month'<sup>302</sup> (of which the new moon is a day 'of trumpets', but 'on the tenth a day of atonement'<sup>303</sup> -things known to God alone who has laid down laws concerning them? And who has so entered into 'the mind of Christ'<sup>304</sup> that he can understand the seven years of the freedom of the Hebrew servants and 'the release' of debts and the relief from tillage of the Holy Land?<sup>305</sup> And there is also what is called the Jubile over and above the feast of seven years,<sup>306</sup> but what is clearly or what are the true laws to be fulfilled in it no one can even so much as imagine, save he who has contemplated the Father's will concerning his ordinances in all the aeons in accordance with 'his inscrutable judgements and his unsearchable ways'.<sup>307</sup>

Origen deals similarly<sup>308</sup> with the same question in *commMatt*. He avers that it is hard to understand the deeper meaning of these temporal categories, saying that he who would attempt to interpret them "will fall into an abyss of conceptions" explaining further that he uses the name of "abyss because of the depth of the doctrines" indicated by those temporal categories.<sup>309</sup>

Hence Origen regards the narration in Genesis as pertaining to the very beginning of creation. We draw this view mainly from his assertions that the "days" in Genesis do not express any time but a process of thought<sup>310</sup> and just an "order",<sup>311</sup> as well as from his references to his work "Commentary on Genesis" (which is lost) when he refers to the the very beginning of creation.<sup>312</sup> In the *Princ*<sup>313</sup> he also refers to that lost work and the whole context at that point clearly indicates that the discussion is about the very beginning of the creation. In *Cels*, too, appeals to his work "On Genesis" and gives a brief

account of the meaning of "days" stated in Genesis.<sup>314</sup> The same view is found in the Sixteenth of the "Homilies on Jeremiah" where he states that the only narration about the creation of the world is that which has been written "by the Holy Spirit",<sup>315</sup> at that point Origen also uses the term *κοσμοποιία* which is characteristic and indicative of the moment which marks the very beginning of the actual creation, as we discuss in chapter 5. Furthermore, in *Cels.* he refers to the "divine word" uttered through Moses about the "beginning of the world" (ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ κόσμου).<sup>316</sup> Finally, in the Fragment 383 of the "Commentary on Matthew" it is stated that the "six" days of Genesis pertain to the creative act of God.<sup>317</sup>

In any case, Origen takes particular care to portray his conviction that Incarnation enlightens *future* time until its end, which means that his thought is preoccupied with the eschatological perspectives of the world-which underlines the fact that Origen's thought is par excellence an eschatological one.

In view of the discussion above one might wonder what was actually new in what O. Cullmann said about the meaning of time after the incarnation of Christ. Leaving aside his assertions about a "rectilinear" time, which have been reasonably challenged,<sup>318</sup> and which actually cannot withstand a criticism pertaining to the nature of time proper, our view is that O. Cullmann has said nothing that Origen did not actually say about the meaning which time acquired after the incarnation of Christ. On the contrary Cullmann's views have been criticized as creating "serious, indeed insurmountable, obstacles to a real doctrine of incarnation".<sup>319</sup>

It is therefore quite indicative of how little Origen's thought has been understood that Cullmann directs a severe criticism against Origen, namely regarding him as a kind of Gnostic. His arguments, however, can be challenged on their own grounds as it is he himself<sup>320</sup>

who states the criteria for regarding a thought as a Gnostic one. Those criteria are held to be these:

1. Rejection of the Old Testament and its role in the history of salvation.
2. Docetism -the theory of the imaginary suffering of Jesus.
3. Rejection of the eschatological expectation in terms of time and adoption of a metaphysical distinction between this world and a timeless Beyond.

That Origen attributes a prominent and crucial role to the Old Testament needs no further discussion. Besides he quite often argues against the Gnostics who do not recognize that the God of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament and so they "split the divinity".<sup>321</sup>

On the question of Docetism he explicitly rejects the opinion which impugns the reality of suffering and death of Jesus; and he does so using the very term *δόκησις*<sup>322</sup> obviously rebuking the Gnostics. Furthermore he does affirm that the incarnation of Christ was an event of full historical reality<sup>323</sup> and his death, as a man, was fully real, too.<sup>324</sup>

As far as the *eschatological expectation* is concerned this has already been discussed to a certain extent and it will be a major topic throughout this work, as Origen's thought is above all eschatological.

O. Cullmann refers to Irenæus stating that there is hardly another theologian who grasped the meaning of salvation and that the historical work of Christ is a central point in a line which leads from the Old Testament to the second advent of Christ. In any case, Origen (as well as Clement) is stated as a kind of counter-point of Irenæus and in fact they are postulated as standing very near to Gnosticism.

In view of the facts proving Origen's attitude towards Gnosticism<sup>325</sup> it is extremely unfair that O. Cullmann attacks Origen as

he implicitly regards him a kind of Gnostic.<sup>326</sup> For, according to the criteria adopted by Cullman himself, it can be said that it could be far too hard to find another theologian who perceived the entire course of the world through the central and crucial historical event of the incarnation of Christ. Not only the enlightenment of time both before and after the incarnation, but also the *dramatic* character of time itself (s. *infra*) have been established due to the very event of the incarnation of Christ. Amongst his numerous references to the decisive eschatological purpose of the incarnation of Christ (some of them already quoted), we just quote this which is indicative of how explicitly Origen affirmed that the incarnation of Christ is the historical event which has direct eschatological consequences towards the goal of salvation:

"When you hear that *salvation* is from the Jews, you should understand these words pertain to Him who said them. For it was He who was the *expectation* of the nations,<sup>327</sup> he who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh".<sup>328</sup>

In a small passage Origen affirms the continuity from the Old to the New Testament as he implicitly appeals to both of them (namely in Gen. 49,10 and Rom.1,3); he underlines the meaning of time before the incarnation of Christ through the term *expectation*; and he denotes the meaning of time thereafter through the term *salvation*.

It would be extremely hard indeed for O. Cullmann, and for anyone else, to find a theologian who could express so many profound theological conceptions through so few words.

Likewise, E. de Faye<sup>329</sup> attributes a Gnostic influence on Origen on the question of the incarnation of Christ. The only difference from O. Cullmann is that Faye does it quite explicitly and seems to have no doubt about his assertions. In chapter 1, however, we have already shown that Faye grounded his allegations of Gnostic influence upon

Origen on entirely mistaken assumptions and profound miscomprehensions of his thought. It is no surprising, therefore, that he makes one more erroneous assertion out of the mistaken premises on which his entire work is grounded.

A major factor causing Origen's thought to be erroneously related to Gnosticism is that Origen is regarded *a priori* as a Platonist. It has been said that Gnosis is the outcome of an extreme Hellenization of Christianity.<sup>330</sup> Hence the alleged relation of Origen to Gnosticism is an *inference* rather than an outcome of an actual study of his own works. Once he was postulated as a "Platonist" and a Christian, scholars like E. de Faye found it quite reasonable to postulate Origen as a "Gnostic", too. Origen's own words, however, show that such an assertion is a wrong conclusion drawn out of erroneous presuppositions. For they took for granted that in Origen would be found a "Hellenizing" Christianity (ελληνίζων Χριστιανισμός), a characterization applied even to Manichaeism.<sup>331</sup> What has eluded those scholars, however, is that Origen explicitly and many times rebukes Manichaeans by name, and that throughout his work there are numerous statements against particular Gnostic assertions.

Hence, the strong eschatological concern in his thought Origen takes particular care in expressing his view of the "eternal gospel", as discussed above. And in view of this discussion we can now take into account the criticism on this subject directed against Origen by Jerome:

"And when he (sc. Origen) has said that the 'eternal gospel' of the Apocalypse of John, that is the gospel which exists in the heavens is as far superior to our gospel as the preaching of Christ is to the rites of the old law, he goes to the extreme length of inferring (what is impious even to have thought of) that Christ will also suffer in the air and in the realms above for the salvation of the daemons. And

although he does not actually say so, yet it must be understood as a logical consequence, that as God was made man for the sake of men, to set them free, so also for the salvation of the daemons he will be made what they are, for whose liberation he is then to come. And in case it should be supposed that we are putting our own interpretation upon his statements, we will give his very words: 'For just as he fulfilled the shadow of the law through the shadow of the gospel, so because all law is a copy and shadow of the heavenly rites, we must carefully inquire whether we ought not to regard even the heavenly law and the rites of the higher worship not as possessing completeness, but as standing in need of the truth of that gospel which in the Apocalypse of John is called the "eternal gospel", in comparison, that is, with this gospel of ours, which is temporal and was preached in a world and an age that are destined to pass away'. <sup>332</sup>

In order to discuss these remarks properly, one should examine what is stated in the *Princ*, on this subject. It is stated that "as in this earth the law was a kind of schoolmaster to those who by it were appointed to be led to Christ<sup>333</sup> and to be instructed and trained in order that after their training in the law they might be able with greater facility to receive the more perfect precepts of Christ, so also that other earth, when it receives all the saints, first imbues and educates them in the precepts of the true and eternal law in order that they may with greater facility accept the precepts of heaven which are perfect and to which nothing can ever be added. And in heaven will truly exist what is called the 'eternal gospel' and the testament that is always new, which can never grow old.<sup>334</sup>

In the same work it is also stated:

"We must also see, however, whether the scriptures may not perhaps indicate this further truth, that just as the legislation is presented with greater clearness and distinctness in Deuteronomy than

in those books which were written at first, so also we may gather from that coming of the Saviour which he fulfilled in humility, when he 'took upon him the form of a servant',<sup>335</sup> an indication of the 'more splendid and glorious second coming in the glory of his Father',<sup>336</sup> at which coming, when in the kingdom of heaven all the saints shall live by the laws of the 'eternal gospel',<sup>337</sup> the figure of Deuteronomy will be fulfilled; and just as by his present coming he has fulfilled that law which has a 'shadow of the good things to come',<sup>338</sup> so also by that glorious coming the shadow of his first coming will be fulfilled and brought to perfection. For the prophet has spoken of this thus: 'The breath of our countenance is Christ the Lord, of whom we said that under his shadow we shall live among the nations',<sup>339</sup> that is at the time when he shall duly transfer all the saints from the temporal to the eternal gospel, to use a phrase by John in the Apocalypse, where he speaks of the 'eternal gospel'.<sup>340</sup>

What becomes obvious from these passages as well our previous discussion in this section, is that Jerome's allegations about Origen's thought are quite arbitrary.

First, Origen firmly holds that the passion of Christ was a unique event and took place for the salvation of all rational creatures and not only of human beings.

Indeed Origen remains constantly consistent in his view of the world comprising various ranks of life as he asserts that the incarnation of Christ and his sacrifice has taken place not only for the sake of human beings but also for the sake of all rational creatures.

In *comm. John* hesitates that Christ "died not only for the sake of men but also for the sake of the rest of rational beings",<sup>341</sup> for it is Paul who states that Christ "tasted death for the sake of everyone (*παντός*)".<sup>342</sup> "It would, therefore, be absurd to say that he tasted death only for the human sins and not for the sake of anyone else being in sin,



apart from men."<sup>343</sup>

Moreover, the passion of Jesus was a benevolent act of God not only for the sake of human beings who lived thereafter, but also those who had already died.<sup>344</sup> Origen again appeals to Paul in order to ground this view; it is the passage in Col.1,20 which says that Christ "made peace through the blood of his cross both to those on earth and to those in the heavens". "It is he who went into the lowest parts of the earth"<sup>345</sup> and he also went above all heavens, preparing the road which leads to above all heavens, that is out of corporeality."<sup>346</sup>

Thus Jesus came in order to "make perfect ... every rational creature and not only man".<sup>347</sup>

The conclusion at this point is, therefore, that out of the *unique* incarnation and passion of Christ *all* rational creatures have benefitted no less than human beings did. Therefore, the incarnation is a unique event not only for humanity, but also for the entire world. This is how Origen affirms the *once and for all* occurrence of the incarnation remaining consistent with his fundamental conception of the *world*, as discussed in chapter 1.

One can see therefore that Jerome's allegations that Origen affirmed a future incarnation of Christ in order to save creatures of other ranks of life is entirely ungrounded and has nothing to do with Origen's real views.

As far as the notion of "eternal gospel" is concerned, it should be noted that this notion very vividly underlines the eschatological character of Origen's thought. What Jerome states on this is not very far from what Origen really held, as we can see it from his passages in Greek. What Origen believes is this: God manifested himself in the form of a man, so that he would be comprehended by creatures. He showed his wisdom to men in the form of human words, for the same reason. This is why Origen believes that "now, even if we become able to see

God by our mind and heart, we do not see him 'as he really is' but as he manifests himself towards us according to his dispensation".<sup>348</sup> Thus, as the death of Jesus does not mean that Christ passed away, so the destruction of the world does not entail that the gospel, which Christ preached to the *entire* world, will pass away. Christ returned to "what he was before the incarnation"<sup>349</sup> and in the gospel there is a "truth" which is "beyond the figures".<sup>350</sup>

Origen's conception of "intelligible and spiritual gospel"<sup>351</sup> stands in accordance with his notion of prolongation of time. He affirms that "the church ... has been founded in the name of Christ until the consummation of the aeon".<sup>352</sup> We know, nevertheless, that after the "consummation" time will continue. The question which then arises is how salvation will be possible after the consummation of the world. Origen provides his answer on this question on the one hand by his notion of the perpetual intelligible advent of the Logos, and on the other hand by providing allegorical exegeses the term "church".

The intelligible advent of the Logos does not pertain only to the visible world, but to the entire world; also it does not pertain only to the present aeon, but to the whole of the time.<sup>353</sup> Thus Origen can hold that the saving intervention of Logos into the world will continue after the consummation. To a hypothetical question "how future generations will know the revelation given to the world by the unique incarnation of the Logos?" Origen's quite simple answer is to affirm that "it is God alone who knows the measures of his self-revelation into the world".<sup>354</sup>

Holding the view that the church is the place for the salvation and that this church will last until the consummation of this aeon, Origen adopts a further allegory of the term "church", asserting that "each rational being is a holy place by no means inferior to the church; for rational nature is made so that it may comprehend the glory of God".<sup>355</sup>

This is virtually the third "deduction" (απαγωγή)<sup>355</sup> that Origen makes from the term "church".

The first answer of Origen is that the world itself is a product of God's goodness, so that rational beings will strive for their salvation, that is, their return to God by their free moral action.<sup>357</sup> Thus this is the "place" where rational beings will strive for their salvation. In respect of this, "any place of the world is a part of the whole, since the entire world is a temple of God" and thus a Christian can pray standing "in any place".<sup>358</sup> Hence the "farm" (stated in the parable in Matt. 13, 36-43) "would be said to be the entire world and not only the church of God".<sup>359</sup>

The second deduction is that, before Incarnation, the "holy place" of God is the temple of Solomon (and, subsequently, the law of the Old Testament<sup>360</sup>), whereas after Incarnation "holy place" of God and "place" for salvation is the Church.<sup>361</sup> According to this exegesis, the term "world" may be applied to the church.<sup>362</sup>

The third deduction is to deem that "holy place" of God is "each rational being"; specifying this to man, he calls it "soul".<sup>363</sup> In the light of this exegesis "a man alone" (μόνος ὁ ἄνθρωπος) can be said to be "the entire world" (ὁ κόσμος ὅλος).<sup>364</sup>

Indeed, the third deduction which Origen makes for the content of the term "church" stands very close to the first one; for neither is time terminated at the end of the æon nor does the world comprise "souls" only (that is, human beings) and Christ was incarnated for the sake of *all* rational beings and not only of men.

One would wonder why Origen feels it necessary to make the third deduction above, namely to aver that every rational being is a "holy place" of God. The answer to this question lies in Origen's conception of consummation as destruction of the world.

In the continuum of time there are those fixed points which

determine the limits of each particular aeon; those points mark the consummation of an aeon and their duration is infinitely short. So consummation marks no "break" of the continuity of time, as this is a moment of no actual duration. Nevertheless, at that infinitely short time a re-arrangement of the world takes place; it could therefore be asserted that, for a moment, the "world", as an order of rational beings in the various ranks of life, loses its actual meaning and content; for, at that "moment", rational beings are "transposed" from one rank of life to another, according to their merits. Notions like those, however, are totally beyond Origen's thought.

It is through the third deduction that the relation between God and the world is maintained, in spite of the fact that the arrangement of the world is dissolved at the moment of judgement. Although, at the infinitely short time of consummation, the "world" is destroyed, what remains is the rational being in itself which is not "destroyed" at the consummation. In Origen it makes sense to say that "the world is destroyed", meaning the dissolution of its order; but in no case does it make sense to say that a rational nature is destroyed.<sup>365</sup> At that very moment of consummation (conceived theoretically, of course, as it has no duration at all), although the world is supposed to have been "destroyed", the continuity of space-time is realized in the very existence of the individual rational creature, standing before the just judgement of God. The world may be destroyed; what however remains indestructible throughout all the time is the *personal identity* of a rational creature.

Therefore, it is the conception of continuity of time as well as that of the personal identity of rational creatures that can be traced in the basis of Origen's third deduction of the term "church".

**The "intelligible crucifixion" of Christ.** The notion of "intelligible advent" of the Logos is related to the notion of "intelligible

crucifixion" of Christ either before or after his corporeal one.<sup>365</sup> This is a notion which has suffered serious misunderstandings. P. Koetschau quotes views of Justinian<sup>367</sup> on the question of the incarnation of the Logos, which are attributed to Origen. The passage reads as follows:

"But if we wish to continue our enquiries as far as the passion of the Lord our Saviour, although it is a bold and venturesome thing to seek for his passion in the heaven, nevertheless, if there are 'spiritual hosts of wickedness' in the heavenly places and if we are not ashamed to confess that the Lord was crucified in order to destroy those whom he destroyed through his passion, why should we fear to suspect that something similar to this may happen in the realms above, in order that the inhabitants of all places may be saved by his passion? "<sup>368</sup>

It is out of two fundamental notions of Origen's theology that views as that above are attributed to him:

First, his conception of the world comprising many ranks of life, some of them higher and others lower than the human one.

Secondly, it is the notion of Origen of "intelligible crucifixion" as well that such a "crucifixion" may either have taken place before or it may take place after the corporeal one.

As far as the first notion is concerned we note that Origen would have never asserted that another crucifixion could take place for the salvation of the creatures of a higher rank of life, as alleged in the above-mentioned passage. The reason is simply that Origen firmly believes that the incarnation and passion of the Logos took place for the sake not only of human beings but also of all rational creatures, as we have seen.

As regards the "intelligible crucifixion", it should be enquired how Origen perceives the content of this notion. In the *commJohn* he clearly states his perception of this "crucifixion".

"And you should know that there was no time when a man,

figuratively said as living according to Jesus, did not exist in this life, either before or after the historical era of Jesus. Accordingly, I think of him who was once enlightened and has tasted the heavenly gift and was partaker of the Holy Spirit and has tasted the good word of God and of powers of the aeon to come; if he falls away he renews himself again to repentance, pre-crucifying or re-crucifying the son of God and putting him to an open shame, either before the historical advent of our saviour or even after it.<sup>369</sup> For he who commits sin now, after the enlightenment and the rest of God's benefactions to him, he re-crucifies the son of God by his sins themselves to which he fell back, even though he carries out nothing of the commonly said corporeal act of crucifixion of the son of God; and the same thing was happening before as anyone who committed sins after he had heard the divine words, he was pre-crucifying the son of God. And one might accept what allegedly has been said by the saviour and is stated in the Acts of Paul; 'I am about to be crucified from above (ἀνωθεν μέλλω σταυρούσθαι)'; as he [sc. who accepts that this phrase has been said by Jesus] admits that the [saying of Jesus] 'I am about to be crucified from above' pertains to the time after the advent, similarly, before the advent, when the same causes arise [he should admit] the saying 'even then I am about to be crucified'. For why, as he 'from above' is about to be crucified, he was not so before? And you should perceive that the [saying] 'I have been crucified together with Christ'<sup>370</sup> is said not only by the saints after his presence, but also by the former ones, so that we do not say that the saints after the presence have any difference from Moses and the patriarchs. And the 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me'<sup>371</sup> should be regarded as said not only by those after the presence but also by those before it. And I attend to the [saying] 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living' which is said by the saviour

and [I think that], out of this [saying], Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are living, since they also, once buried together with Christ, rose together with him<sup>372</sup> yet certainly not at [the time of] the corporeal burial of Jesus or the corporeal resurrection of his."<sup>373</sup>

Hence, what Origen means by this particular conception of "crucifixion" does not pertain to any corporeal passion, but it denotes Christ's regret and suffering in seeing rational creatures, who have made a progress towards him, fall back. Their "falling back" constitutes the actual meaning of this "crucifixion".

Origen's reference to the alleged saying of Jesus "I am about to be crucified from above", as well as his statements about "recrucifixion" in general, are obviously the source of Jerome's allegations that "Origen allows himself to assert that Christ has often suffered and will often suffer".<sup>374</sup>

But the analysis above shows how Origen perceives this "passion" "from above" and what is the actual content he attributes to this conception. What "died" was the man Jesus Christ and his corporeal presence, suffering and death took place once and for all. It is only in that case that "death" can be applied in a strictly literal sense; for "Logos in himself is not susceptible of death, but it was human nature to which it occurred",<sup>375</sup> as, therefore, "human nature", that is "corporeality" of the Logos was assumed once and for all, it follows that "death" in a literal sense is but a unique event. Thus Jerome's above-mentioned allegations are totally misleading and in no way express Origen's authentic view on the subject.

It should be added that a conception of "passion" of Christ lies also in the persecution and suffering of a real Christian.<sup>376</sup> For what happens to the church is understood to happen to Christ himself, as "Christ is the head of the Church"<sup>377</sup> so that Christ and church are one body".<sup>378</sup> This is the sense in which Christ is regarded as having been

"crucified" in the past and as to be so in the future.

In *Cels* Origen clearly explains how he perceives the "passion" of Christ throughout time:

"It might well cause amazement among those with moderate intellectual powers that a man who was accused and charged falsely did not defend himself and prove himself not guilty of any of these charges, although he could have done so by expatiating on the fine quality of his life and showing that his miracles were done by God, to give the judge an opportunity of giving his case a more favourable judgement. This he did not do, but despised and nobly ignored his accusers. That the judge would have released Jesus without hesitation if he had made any defence is clear from what is written about him where he said: 'Which of the two do you wish me to release to you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?' and, as the scripture goes on to say: 'For he knew that out of malice they had delivered him'.<sup>379</sup> Now Jesus is always (αἰ) being falsely accused, and there is never a time when he is not being accused so long as there is evil among men. He is still silent in face of this and does not answer with his voice; but he makes his defence in the lives of his genuine disciples, for their lives cry out the real facts and defeat all false charges, refuting and overthrowing the slanders and accusations."<sup>380</sup>

If one were to follow the falsifying logic of Justinian and Jerome one would subsequently assert that Origen holds a notion of an "eternity of passion". For in the passage above, he says that "Jesus is always falsely accused"; and at another point Origen quotes John 1,29, saying that Christ "is always bearing and taking away the sin of those seeking refuge to him" noting that it happened in the past, is happening now and will happen in future.<sup>381</sup> Accordingly, in *homJer*, Origen quotes Jer.15,10 ("Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man standing before judges and a man of contention to the whole earth")



explaining it as follows:

"If you see the martyrs being everywhere judged for my sake and in each particular church standing before judges, you will see in what way Jesus Christ is judged in the person of each martyr; for it is himself who is judged in the person of those who utter the truth. And this will convince you, so that you consider that it is not you who are in prison when you are in prison, but it is him; it is not you who are hungry, it is not you who are thirsty but it is him; [and] it is not you who is thirsty, but it is him. ... Thus when a Christian is judged (yet not for something else, not for his own sins, but just because he is a Christian) it is Christ himself who is actually judged. Therefore Christ is judged throughout the earth; and whenever a Christian is judged, it is Christ himself who is judged; [and] not only before the official courts, but where a Christian is slandered by someone, it is also then that Christ himself is unfairly judged. ... everywhere Christ is suffering actions taken against him and judged. ... There are two things that Jesus suffers amongst men; either he is condemned by those unfaithful or he is put in doubt by the double-minded. If you put on 'the image of the heavenly' and live aside 'the image of the earthly',<sup>382</sup> then you are not the earth which condemns him, and neither are you the earth in which he is condemned nor are you the earth which puts him in doubt.<sup>383</sup> Thus in a Christian who is "fulfilled with grief and is tormented and condemned by the unjust" it is Christ himself who is actually "suffering the trial" (δικαζόμενος).<sup>384</sup>

In the the same work, Origen gives a most vivid portrayal of this "passion" of Christ:

"This lord himself, my Jesus Christ says: 'I gave my back to the whips, and my cheeks to slaps. I hid not my face from the shame of spitting.'<sup>385</sup> Those who abide with the letter understand that these refer only to that time when Pilate whipped him and when the Jews

were conspiring against him. But I see Jesus each day 'giving his back to the whips'. Go into the Jewish synagogues and see Jesus being whipped by the blasphemies of their tongues. See the pagans being gathered and conspiring against the Christians and how they regard Jesus and [you will see that] he 'gives his back to the whips'. Perceive the deeper meaning of the Logos of God being abused, reviled, hated by the unfaithful. See that he 'gave his cheeks to slaps' and once he taught that if one 'shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also' he did so himself. So many people are slapping him in the face and whipping him, but he is silent and he does not speak. For he has been narrated as not speaking during his being whipped. And until now Jesus did not hide his face from the same of spitting. For who of those disparaging the teaching [of his] does not even unto now spit, as it were, Christ who is tolerating this?"<sup>385</sup>

Furthermore, in *commJohn*, Origen quotes John,8,49 ("and ye do dishonour me") stating tht this "has not been said only to those people, but to those who always (αἰ) dishonour him, by their acts against the right word of God, and dishonour him by deeds unjust to Christ, who is justice and, by acts out of feebleness and weakness, dishonour the power of God,"<sup>387</sup> for 'Christ is the power of God'.<sup>388</sup> And to anyone who has contempt for wisdom would be said 'and ye do dishonour me' (John,8,49) as Christ himself is wisdom, too."<sup>389</sup>

In Origen's view Christ himself "laments and mourns for our sins"<sup>390</sup> and when we are praying he "prays with us to the father, being a mediator".<sup>391</sup>

The previous analyses as to what Origen means by "body" of Christ should be recalled here in order to make this point clear. It is the whole world, in the first place, and, after the Incarnation, it is the Church, that are meant by the term "body" of Christ. The corporeal passion of the Logos was both a historical event and a figure of the

ongoing "passion" of his "body", which is realized either in each act against his word or in a relapse of a rational creature which formerly was just. Similarly, the resurrection was both a historical event and a figure of the "resurrection" of his entire "body" which is now suffering the "passion".

The conclusion on this question is that the opinions of both Justinian and Jerome, concerning Origen's view of "passion" of Christ, are misleading and attributes to Origen views which he did not actually hold. For Origen's view of "intelligible crucifixion" and "always" suffering of Christ has a meaning which in no way puts the uniqueness of the Incarnation in question. If Christ was to suffer in "the realms above" as it has been alleged (on the basis of Origen's quotation of the passage "I am about to be crucified from above" -ignoring his comments on it), it is obvious that Christ would have to assume a body again, because corporeality exists in all ranks of life. But this idea is totally alien to Origen's authentic views, as he consistently reaffirms the  $\epsilon\phi'$   $\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\theta\epsilon\varsigma$  of the incarnation of Christ and holds that this intervention of God into space-time took place once and for all and it was the entirety of the world that benefitted from that unique corporeal presence of Christ in the world.

**Conclusion.** The conclusion of this analysis is that when Origen speaks of "eternal gospel" he neither implies any repetition of the corporeal passion of Christ nor does he imply that the gospel preached by Jesus is, in a sense, "incomplete". Far for the contrary. Origen does affirm the uniqueness of the incarnation of the Logos; and he considers that the word of Christ will "always" act into the world as it is "perfect". Quoting Matt.24,35 ("Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away") he provides the very core of his conception of the gospel preached by Jesus Christ with respect to time:

"For the words of the saviour always will carry out what is

befitting them, because they are perfect and not susceptible of becoming better as if what they are now would pass away. But 'heaven and earth will pass away, but his words will remain' because they are words said by him through whom everything was made; \*\*\* for the reason of what has been made does not pass away, even though those made pass away."<sup>392</sup>

In *expProv* it is also affirmed that "The heaven and the earth will pass away ... yet the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ will not pass away".<sup>393</sup>

Therefore Jerome quite falsely and misleadingly attributes to Origen assertions such as that "the gospel" is regarded "as not possessing completeness" as it "was preached in a world and an age that are destined to pass away".<sup>394</sup> For it is Origen himself who uses a superb term as a predication of the gospel, affirming that "the gospel is αδιάδοχον", the term *αδιάδοχον* meaning "without successor" or "perpetual" in the sense of "perfect",<sup>395</sup> and this, as Christ is a "heaven who neither passes away nor can he be destroyed".<sup>396</sup>

As the term "logos" in Greek means both "word" and "reason", Origen articulates his above-mentioned view considering that both the word of Jesus and the reasons of creation will "always" exist. The passage above is a crucial one, because it clearly portrays Origen's view of the meaning of time after the incarnation of Christ as well as the eschatological implications of this event. What is there said is that the words of Jesus exist in order to help rational beings to abolish the reasons (that is, the fall) because of which creation came into being. Furthermore, those words of Christ are not a circumstantial event in the whole continuum of time, but, once they were pronounced to the world, they will exist for as long as the reasons for the existence of the world exist. Thus the eschatological perspectives of Incarnation are clearly indicated, as Incarnation is regarded as a unique historical

event, the significance of which pertains to the entirety of the world; an event which established a meaning for time thereafter until the end of the world.

What the analysis of incarnation with respect to time shows is that Origen considers movement in time as always directed not merely forward but *forward with a final purpose to be fulfilled* because it has been *promised*. In this movement forward, future is related to past regarded as a result of free moral action. So future is regarded not only as unknown but also as essentially unformed, as it depends on free moral action. Future is known to God alone. God, in his timelessness, does not remain inactive with respect to creation but he intervenes into space-time and acts within it. Such an action is the bestowal of his foreknowledge on the prophets and its subsequent proclamation to human beings. These prophecies, nevertheless, are completely enlightened only when what has been foretold is realized in space-time. Usually the realization of prophecies constitutes an intervention of God into the world. The main characteristic of these acts of God is that they stand in dialectical relation to creaturely free moral action: they take place at certain moments of time, which are known to God only, too. These moments are called "kairoi". Thus the direction of the world in time is decisively determined and enlightened by the categories of "prophecy" and "kairos". How these notions affect the character of time is what we are going to examine next.

### **§ 3. The concept of prophecy**

In Origen's view it is the eschatological direction of time as well as the fact that time is not infinite in both directions (that is, in past and future) that allows prophecy to have an actual meaning. Time had a beginning and will have an end; this finite "extension" is marked by fixed points which determine the limits of aeons and thus one can

speak of a "relative beginning" or "end", that is the beginning or end of an aeon.<sup>397</sup> This non-infinity of time makes it comprehensible and it is because of non-infinity that a conceptual "before time" would make some sense, if taken loosely of course, meaning timelessness in the status of uncreated time.

Origen considers the meaning of prophecy in close connexion to his conception of the beginninglessness of the world and of the direction of the world towards an end. If the world were beginningless then it could make no sense to say that there is God "who knows everything before it came into being",<sup>398</sup> for, in that case it could be meaningless to speak of any "before", as time would be regarded as having no beginning; if, therefore, there is no "beginning", then there is nor God's *fore*-knowledge of the world as a whole, exactly because there is no "before". On the other hand, if there were no end of time, prophecy about any "end" would make no sense either. This is why Origen directly relates the non-infinity of space-time with the notion of prophecy. Accordingly, in *commMatt*, he states:

"If the world is not consummated but it exists ad infinitum, then there is no God 'who knows everything before it came into being.' But he partially will know each individual thing 'before it comes into being' or some of them and then again [he will know] others; for things infinite are not containable into knowledge, which by nature contains what is finite. From that follows that [in such a case] neither prophecy of anything is possible, since everything would be infinite."<sup>399</sup>

In the light of this view of Origen, R. Sorabji makes a serious historical mistake when he attributes to Philoponus what is actually Origen's views. His assertion reads thus:

"Up to 529, Christians adopted a defensive position. They sought only to rebut the arguments that the universe *cannot* have a beginning. In 529, however, in Alexandria, Philoponus moved on the attack: he

sought to show that the universe *must* have had a beginning. The most striking and influential of his arguments had to do with the concept of infinity".<sup>400</sup>

This view of Sorabji is erroneous. For it was Origen who long before had established the view that the cosmos *must* have had a beginning. And it was Origen who explicated that "What creates is older than what is created" (Πάν γάρ τὸ ποιοῦν πρεσβύτερον τοῦ ποιουμένου)<sup>401</sup> and "what proceeds from a cause must necessarily have a beginning".<sup>402</sup> It is also Origen who challenges "those who hold that the world is not created" stating that "they cannot speak of any beginning of the world" (ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν οὖν τοῖς ἀγένητον υἱστομένοις τὸν κόσμον ἀρχὴν αὐτοῦ εἰπεῖν).<sup>403</sup> And, referring to the actual creation, it is him who speaks of "a certain fixed time when the world will be brought to the end which it must necessarily have *since it had a beginning*".<sup>404</sup>

As to what prophecy is in itself, Origen regards it as a function in time; yet he also takes into consideration the divine inspiration of prophecy and, subsequently, the causality between timelessness and time, as discussed in chapter 2. Hence, he defines prophecy as follows:

"Prophecy is a prediction of future occurrences; this saying is accomplished when what has been foretold comes to pass. It did not come to pass because it was foretold; for this kind of thing is not prophecy; but it was told because it was to come to pass; and this is prophecy".<sup>405</sup>

By the passage above Origen not only provides the definition of prophecy in itself; he also defines the causative relation between prophetic announcement of an event and the realization of it. Out of his conviction about creaturely freedom, he regards the future accomplishment of prophecy as a *cause* whereas prophecy is regarded as a *result*, although temporally preceding the event itself. Thus,

prophecy is "first" and yet it is a result; realization of prophecy is "second" and yet it is a cause. Thus, we have a causality *in time* the parts of which are regarded in a reversed order. Indeed, it is in this way that Origen holds the relation between "first" and "second" in the eschatological evolution in time; and this conception is portrayed by Origen's statement that "Those *former* bear in themselves an *image* of those *latter*" (Τῶν ἁρ' δευτέρων εἰκόνα φέρει τὰ πρῶτα).<sup>405</sup>

Much discussion has been made about Origen's "allegorical method" which led R. Hanson<sup>407</sup> and H. Koch<sup>408</sup> to the utterly misleading conclusion that Origen actually has no eschatological ideas. On this we discuss in chapters 4 and 5. Here it is worth quoting an opinion of J. Daniélou:

"People are continually talking about his (sc. Origen's) love of allegory and comparing it with Clement's. How far is that true? I think I have shown -it is in fact one of the conclusions that emerge most plainly from the book- that Origen had the greatest respect for the traditional typology; he followed the rest of the Church in seeing figures of the mysteries of Christ's life in certain texts of the Old Testament. His work thus contain a whole theology of history which shows him to great advantage as an exponent of biblical theology."<sup>409</sup>

We endorse this statement, even though we cannot do the same with the author's ensuing assertions about Gnostic influence on Origen on this point. Similar views have been taken by H. de Lubac<sup>410</sup> and M. Harl.<sup>411</sup> The statement of Origen which we adduce here is, we think, one of the most clear proofs that the dramatic relation between Present and Future plays a predominant role in his thought.

This means that it is future which enlightens and gives a real meaning to past. This is why Origen employs those definitions of "end" (τέλος) from Aristotle and Herophilus which express his own theological conception of "end".<sup>412</sup> It was the incarnation of the Logos.



that enlightened the time of Old Testament and its perspectives, which previously were hidden in "mysteries".<sup>413</sup> Accordingly, it will be the second advent of Christ that will reveal all the truth which is at present hidden behind the words of the gospel; that is, he will show the "eternal gospel" in itself, without articulating it in rites.

This view of Origen, namely that it is the future which finally enlightens past, can be traced throughout his whole theology. In *Ce/s* he states that "*the end showed up* the wonders of the Egyptians to have been produced by trickery, while those of Moses were divine".<sup>414</sup> Also, in the same work: "For if *the end*, which was that a whole nation owed its origin to the wonders of Moses, *shows* the indubitable fact that it was God who caused the miracles of Moses, why should not this argument be even more in the case of Jesus, since he did a greater work than that of Moses?"<sup>415</sup>

It is out of the view of the crucial and revealing meaning of the future that prophecy acquires a significant place in Origen's work.

The question which arises here, however, is this: In discussing the notion of causality we said that it is in causality between time and timelessness that cause and effect are regarded in a reverse order. How then is it possible to consider the same thing happening in a causality *in time* -namely in the relation between *pre-announcement* of an event and *realization* of it? The answer to this question lies in the fact that this causality, although manifested in time, is actually a causality between time and timelessness. For prophecy is uttered by a prophet yet it is God himself who speaks through the prophet and what is said is coming from God's foreknowledge of everything.

Thus, prophecy as a *result*, is actually originated in timelessness even though it is manifested in time. So, as far as causality is concerned, prophecy is a case of causality between timelessness and time as discussed in chapter 2.

With respect to this, in *Ce/s*, Origen states: "The proclamation of future events is the characteristic of divinity, since they are not foretold by a natural human faculty,<sup>416</sup> and from the consequent events we draw the conclusion that it was a divine spirit which proclaimed these things".<sup>417</sup> For "prophecies ... are not inventions, but ... a divine spirit dwelling in the pure souls of the prophets, who underwent any trouble for the sake of virtue, impelled them to prophesy some things for their contemporaries and others for posterity, and above all to prophesy concerning 'a certain saviour who would come to dwell among mankind'".<sup>418</sup> "By his logos God is always correcting those who listen to what he says. In each generation his logos descends into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets".<sup>419</sup>

It is then God who speaks through prophecy.<sup>420</sup> Those who utter the words are just "servants of the truth" and they are the "prophets and the apostles".<sup>421</sup> The reason for God acting so is to help the creatures in their striving for their salvation. "God comprehended all things by his foreknowledge, and seeing that there were these two extremes, willed to tell them about these things through the prophets, in order that those who understood their words might be made lovers of what is better and be their guard against the opposite."<sup>422</sup>

Prophecy then is not just a prediction of future events; but it is a sort of enlightening the perspectives of moral action in time; it is an act underlining the eschatological direction in time and helping towards the realization of the end. This is why Origen holds that to be able just to predict future is not enough for someone to be regarded as a prophet; for prophecy is not just a prediction, but it is an action of the Holy Spirit with crucial eschatological implications. On this subject he states:

"If one prophesies, he is not a prophet; but if he is a prophet, he prophesies. For Valaam prophesies because he is a mantis.<sup>423</sup> Thus one

is not a doctor just because he carried out an act of healing; or one is not a bricklayer just because he carried out an act of building."<sup>424</sup>

The deeper conception of prophecy in Origen can be traced in this passage. He does not deny that there are others who also predicted what was going to happen yet they cannot be considered as prophets; their prediction was nothing but a product of sorcery.<sup>425</sup> In the basis of Origen's conception of prophecy there is his view of time as the means where the dialectical relation between God and world takes place. Prophecy constitutes a manifestation of the benevolent intervention of God into the world; through this act, God enlightens the perspective towards salvation, without affecting human freedom at all; this is why prophecy has always appeared not as a deterministic prediction, which would be oppressing human freedom, but as "mysteries" which were accepted not only by logic but also by faith.<sup>426</sup> "For the law and the prophecies are believed to be words containing announcement of things which reasonably rejoice those who hear them because of the benefit they receive once they accept what is announced."<sup>427</sup>

Prophecy, as crucially related to the eschatological expectation, makes no sense in the Greek conception of time. The "prediction" there, given by a mantis as an oracle, has usually to do with a short-term expectation; the reasons for asking an oracle were usually practical and at the interests of a man or a small group of people. It is an action without long term perspectives and certainly there is no context of any eschatological expectation; it does not pertain to the entirety of human existence and certainly not to the entirety of humanity. This is why, in the various Greek schools of thought, biblical prophecy has no place and it is there almost unthinkable as quite incompatible with that conception of time. For there is no eschatological expectation perceived in terms of a real future realization in space-time. Thus biblical prophecy is totally different from Greek oracles, due to its origin, to

its function and to its perspectives.

Regarding the difference *in origin*, Origen clearly states this contrast of biblical prophecy from Greek oracles:

"From this ground, by collecting evidence from the sacred scriptures, we prove that the prophets among the Jews, being illuminated by the divine spirit in so far as it was beneficial to them as they prophesied, were the first to enjoy the visitation of the superior spirit to them." By contrast, "If the Pythian priestess is out of her senses and has not control of her faculties when she prophesies, what sort of spirit must we think it which poured darkness upon her mind and rational thinking? Its character must be like that of the race of daemons which many Christians drive out of people who suffer from them, without any curious magical art or sorcerer's device, but with prayer alone and very simple adjurations and formulas such as the simplest person could use".<sup>428</sup>

What "the Greeks take to be divine inspiration" coming from "the Pythian Appolo" is just "the daemons" who "perform the petitions of those who bring requests to them more because of the sacrifices they offer than because of their virtuous actions". And the same happens with him "who rules from stormy Dodona"<sup>429</sup> and the "oracle at Claros" and "another at Branchidae and another at the shrine of Zeus Ammon, or at any place on earth where there are oracles" all them are not "gods" but they are "daemons".

Origen generally holds that the gods of the pagans are daemons.<sup>430</sup> Certainly to him any prediction based on astrology is equally rejected as oracles or predictions out of "dreams"; all these are "impious predictions" committed by "false-prophets" because "there is neither augury in Jacob nor oracle in Israel"<sup>431</sup> but what is there is "divine foreknowledge".<sup>432</sup>

In contrast to the "false-prophets" of the pagans, "of the Jewish

prophets some were wise before they received the gift of prophecy and divine inspiration, while others became wise after they had been illuminated in mind by the actual gift of prophecy itself. They were chosen by providence to be entrusted with the divine Spirit and with the utterances that he inspired on account of the quality of their lives, which was of unexampled courage and freedom."<sup>433</sup>

Also "from many passages we might gather the exceptional qualities of the prophets -their freedom, their courage, their watchfulness".<sup>434</sup>

As regards the *function* of prophecy, we have already noted that it in no way oppresses freedom; for it is uttered as a "mystery"<sup>435</sup> accepted only by faith -that is, an act of freedom. Prophecy illuminates the perspectives of moral action without affecting freedom at all. Thus, in *homilies*, Origen stresses the *contingency* in the relation between God and men in the pronouncement of prophecy:

"If we repent, captivity will not go on and God will bestow mercy upon us. ... If we commit sin, we shall be in captivity in the future ... For there is a useful knowledge out of the prophetic writings, that God, because of his love for men, admonishes them so that they will not suffer captivity."<sup>436</sup>

The same sort of *contingency* in God's action towards men is pointed out in the Eighteenth of these Homilies:

"If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, *then* I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. ... If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not in my voice, *then* I will repent of the good, where I said I would benefit them".<sup>437</sup> It is by such scriptural passages that Origen articulates his conviction about the freedom of men in their relation to God even after the utterance of a prophecy.

This is the existential environment in which the *perspectives*

of prophecy are realized. It does not establish any determination but it is rather a kind of "beacon" in time illuminating the road to salvation and yet not coercing its acceptance by men. This salvation will be achieved only with the consent of creaturely freedom, namely faith and proper action. For "it is in our choice to hear and not to hear, as if God had no foreknowledge; neither our freedom of will is less because of God's foreknowledge nor it would be more if God had no foreknowledge".<sup>438</sup> This is why, "promise" and "prophecy" make sense only regarded in the context of a time of freedom, a time directed towards an "end" -both in the sense of "goal" and "termination".

When Origen opposes the doctrines of astrology, it is on the grounds of freedom that he does so. In *commGen* he states that if the stars are to be regarded as "acting" upon human things then human freedom is abolished; and from that follows that there can be neither praise nor blame; therefore, one would not speak of judgement by God nor of course of the outcome of it, referring either to those who will enjoy the award for their good deeds or those who will be punished for their sins. And if this is so, then "the faith is futile and the advent of Christ is futile as accomplishing nothing and so is the dispensation (*oikonomia*) through the law and the prophets, and the toil of the apostles in order to found churches of God through Christ [was futile, too]".<sup>439</sup> All these hypothetical considerations are strongly rejected exactly because "human things are not coerced by necessity".<sup>440</sup>

The main point suggested in the above-mentioned deductive argument of Origen's is that once *freedom* is abolished, then the whole *conception of time* is abolished, too. For, in that event, free moral action loses its actual content; subsequently, judgement ceases to make sense and thus time loses its eschatological perspectives. It is very remarkable that these eschatological perspectives of time are expressed as an *oikonomia* manifested in the succession of "the law",

the "prophets" and the "advent of Christ" and the "toils of the apostles" in order to establish churches. What Origen denotes by the statement "if the stars exercise some kind of action upon us, then our prayer is futile",<sup>441</sup> is exactly the cruciality of the dialectical relation between God and rational creatures in time.

The notion of abolition of freedom coincides with the notion of "vanity"; and "vanity" is mainly portrayed by cyclic movement, especially that of the stars. This conception of Origen that "cyclicality" means "vanity" and "vanity" actually means "absence of freedom" exists also in his deeper conception of time. In articulating his view of prophecy, he expresses it in a way that is in accordance with his overall conception of time, as he explicitly dissociates the notion of prophecy from any implication of either "vanity" or oppression of freedom.

It is in this context that time in Origen is the means where the dialectical relation between God and rational creatures takes place.

In chapter 2 we argued that the notion of *movement* is mainly perceived as free moral action. Prophecy, as an act of God in time, actually constitutes God's "movement" in his dialectical relation with human action. Indeed, Origen avers that prophecy constitutes a *movement* on behalf of God through the utterances of a prophet.

Quoting Deuteronomy 1,3 ("Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them") he states that it is said so "because God was revealing his power and the prophet was using his tongue in order to articulate what had been declared. For *movement* is called the prophetic voice itself, in as much as it articulates what has been said by God".<sup>442</sup>

Hence prophecy, although not affecting freedom, underlines the meaning of time as the "extension" for the return to God. Therefore it orients time according to a perception like this: *providence - prophecy*,

- *promise - expectation - realization - faith - hope - waiting - fulfilment.*

In this process, "prophecy" is exactly the notion which suggests the immediate correlation of divine timelessness to time. For "providence" is actually atemporal whereas the rest of these categories are manifested in time. Prophecy is indeed both *in* time (due to the temporal being of the prophet himself) and *out* of time -as a "contemplation"<sup>443</sup> and "insight"<sup>444</sup> and "communion with divine nature".<sup>445</sup>

Particularly, in the scheme above, *faith* is the existential condition which allows future to be experienced at the present.<sup>446</sup> *Hope* is through which unrealisation is related to faith;<sup>447</sup> and the *expectation* out of this hope has been decisively strengthened after the *realization* of the incarnation and the "exemplified" resurrection, as it was *fulfilled* in the person of Jesus Christ. Hence this hope is a most strong drive for free moral action.<sup>448</sup> When Origen refers to "him who subjected them in hope"<sup>449</sup> means that "subjection" is due to to unrealisation; but it is through hope and faith that unrealisation are regarded as *unrealization as yet*.

This orientation of time towards the eschatological expectation is mainly established through prophecy. In the scheme above, if "prophecy" is taken away then God remains unapproachable in his radical transcendence whereas "promise - faith - hope - expectation - waiting - fulfilment" loose their actual content and meaning as there would be no prophecy to illuminate the direction in time.

Prophecy creates hope; and this means that the objective tranformation of unrealisation into realization will take place when the "fulness of time" comes. As it happens with the bestowal of prophecy itself, so the time when realization of hope will occur is in God's choice; for this realization constitutes one of the times, at which God



acts into history. These "moments" are called "kairoi". As Origen's conception of "kairos" is directly related to the character of time, this is the subject which we shall enquiry next.

#### **§4. The concept of kairos.**

The concept of kairos makes sense in Origen's thought by virtue of the fact that time had a beginning, and "through time" the world is directed to an end. This renders the direction of time a crucial one, because what is moving in time is not a morally indifferent existence of the world, but an entirety of rational creatures whose will comes to a dialectical relation to that of God. The conception of time as an "extension" of free moral action means that this action is related to the will of God, positively or negatively, as "there is nothing between committing sin and not committing sin".<sup>450</sup> It is exactly the notion of kairos which underlines the significance of time as a means where this dialectical relation takes place.

The notion of kairos is quite often used in Origen's work to express significant facets of his theology and particularly of his conception of time. In the first place, in Origen's thought "kairos" denotes a quality of time, namely a time when an event of outstanding significance happens. It has been asserted that "kairos", as a moment in time, pertains to God's action only.<sup>451</sup> We shall enquire to what extent Origen perceives this notion in such a way.

The concept of "kairos" is closely related to that of "prophecy" at least in two ways: First, kairos is a moment of time when a prophecy was pronounced. Secondly, kairos is a time when a prophecy was realized.

**The kairoi of God's action.** It is a fundamental conviction of Origen that it is beyond the comprehensive capacity of rational beings to know "how" and "when"<sup>452</sup> God is going to intervene into the world.

This depends on his choice only and he alone knows the "opportunes times" for his action.

In *Princ*, God is the "perfect superintendent, who has full knowledge both of the times (καιρούς) and the appropriate aids and the paths and the ways" of his action.<sup>453</sup> In *commMatt*, he states that "it is only for the master and his divine knowledge to know the kairos of each man [that is] when the *time of fruits is near* (as in Matt.21,33,43) and when it is far",<sup>454</sup> and this, because "the causes" of what is done "lie entirely in the sphere of providence, and it is not easy for men to come upon their explanation".<sup>455</sup>

Even Jerome acknowledges the belief of Origen about angels performing "duties" "at the various times which are known to God the Artificer."<sup>456</sup> also Jerome attributes to Origen the opinion on the existence of "others" who "in their various places and times, which the Artificer alone knows, undertake the governance of the world. These we believe be the angels".<sup>457</sup>

This notion is also found in *commGen* and it is worth while to compare the passage in Greek to the way Jerome renders the thought of Origen. For Jerome's allegation that "angels ... undertake the governance of the world" is not entirely exact, since what Origen really holds is that these beings serve God's will and they are "functioning spirits" being "sent in order to minister":

"For the holy angels, the functioning spirits who are sent in order to minister,<sup>458</sup> receive, as it is natural, orders which are written according to the law of God, in the appropriate order, and *when* they should and as they should carry out the better things; for it would be absurd to assert that they come at random and not according to a fixed order ... Thus they read the book of God, so that they carry out this task neither at random nor by chance; and so they perform what it is appropriate to them".<sup>459</sup>

Thus, the angels do not "undertake the governance of the world", as Jerome falsely alleges about Origen's thought, but they are just "ministering" God's will, receiving orders from him. It is interesting to note that Origen regards this performance of angels as taking place // time, according to his overall view that the entirety of the world is in time.

The heavenly bodies and their positions constitute a "book of God" which "can well be read by the angels and divine powers" who "act by, as it were, receiving orders". This is the exegesis of the passage in Genesis, 1,14 "let the illuminators be for signs".<sup>450</sup>

Accordingly, in the *commJohn*, Origen asserts that the "angels ... at the ordered kairos ... begin to carry out the dispensation concerning each individual" man.<sup>451</sup> This means that the interaction between rational beings in the world is conceived in the context of the whole world being temporal. The angels act in time and they "begin" to carry out their certain duties at the appropriate time which is indicated by the positions of the stars in this visible firmament. Thus, angels do not actually "undertake the governance of the world", as Jerome suggests about Origen's thought, but they are just beings of other ranks of life and their office is understood in the context of the interaction between the creatures of the various ranks of life in time, be they higher or lower than the human ranks of life.<sup>452</sup>

Hence, the "kairoi" of God's action in the world are "unknown" to men.<sup>453</sup> Nevertheless "there is nothing which has been or will be neglected by God, who makes what should be made in a world of alteration and change"; for "God cares for whole ages as if they were years, so to speak. In each of them, he does what is reasonable for the universe, which is most clearly understood and accomplished by God alone since the truth is known to him".<sup>454</sup> God is like an "artificer" who "knows the disposition of everyone" and it is "only him" who may give

"what is necessary and *when* he should do so to each one".<sup>465</sup>

It is remarkable that Origen depicts the conception of *kairos* in the context of the dialectical relation between God and men by the affirmation that God intervenes in the world "*waiting* for the appropriate preparation to take place" in the world, so that this intervention will be effectively beneficent.<sup>466</sup> This is the time which Origen calls as "*kairos of revelation*" (ἐν καιρῷ ἀποκαλύψεως).<sup>467</sup>

In view of this conception of *kairos*, it is affirmed that Moses and the prophets did not at their time see what the apostles saw during the advent of Jesus, not because they (sc. Moses and the prophets) were "inferior" to the apostles, but because they were "expecting the fulness of time" (ἀλλ' ὡς περιμένοντες τὸ πᾶν ῥωμα τοῦ χρόνου) at which "should be revealed" (ἐχρήν ... ἀποκαλυφθῆναι) what was far too superior to anything which had been previously said or written.<sup>468</sup>

In Origen's view, God, who "knows the *kairoi*",<sup>469</sup> intervenes in history at his appointed opportune times; for he "dispenses the things of the world in *kairoi*".<sup>470</sup>

Prophecy constitutes an outstanding way of God's intervention into time; this is why Origen states that God "sent ... prophets at certain *kairoi*",<sup>471</sup> this was an act of his "will" as he "by his foreknowledge" knew that humanity was striving under an interaction between "two extremes", namely good and evil.<sup>472</sup> Even in a prophet's lifetime there were some moments at which he was "more clear-sighted" under the illumination of the Holy Spirit.<sup>473</sup> Those particular moments in a prophet's lifetime would be called by Origen as "opportune times of the opportune times" (καιροὶ καιρῶν),<sup>474</sup> by this indicating the particular moments of communication with God, like the appropriate moments of prayer.

What is significant is that those opportune times are understood as moments in the process of the eschatological process of

the world; in sending the prophets, God's aim is nothing less than to help people towards their return to him. "When the opportune time comes, God sends this prophet ... so that those who will understand the prophetic words will repent".<sup>475</sup> Thus the era of the prophets was the "kairos of fruits".<sup>476</sup> According to another allegory of Origen's, either Moses or the prophets could be regarded as "those who sowed"<sup>477</sup> whereas "those who reap" are those "who accepted Christ and beheld his glory".<sup>478</sup>

The Incarnation marks a major kairos. In *homJer* there is a passage which indicates the direction of the temporal process from one "opportune time" to another:

"God chose the fathers (sc. of the Jews), he gave a promise to them, he took the people of the fathers' generation out of Egypt, he was merciful to them when they committed sins, educated them as a father, sent prophets to them at opportune times, educated them and turned them back from sins. He has been patient with them always sending the healers until the arch-healer comes, the prophet who was different from the prophets, the healer who was different from those who healed. Once he came they betrayed and killed him ... Look how much of οἰκονομία [there is] for the salvation of the nations."<sup>479</sup>

Thus God's action in the world from "kairos" to "kairos" is manifested to help towards salvation. While consummation of an aeon is a certain kind of kairos,<sup>480</sup> the kairos of Incarnation marked the end of a number of aeons,<sup>481</sup> being the "last kairos",<sup>482</sup> and he also quotes the passage from II Thess.2,1-12, where Paul says that "the day of Christ is at hand" as he was revealed "in his kairos".<sup>483</sup>

In order to denote the significance of certain moments in time, Origen also employs the term "most appropriate time" (ἐντήθετος καιρός). It is by this term that he speaks of the passion of Christ.<sup>484</sup> The time of "judgement" also marks a "kairos" of this particular kind,

since "at the most appropriate time" rational creatures "take up the body which is appointed by God for everyone in accordance with his merits."<sup>485</sup>

**The notion of kairos in man's action.** It is significant that Origen applies the notion of "most opportune time" (ἐκτιθέσσις καιρός) not only to God's but also to man's action.<sup>486</sup> He stresses this notion especially in relation to prayer:

"One of these impossible things, having regard to our weakness, is, I believe, to give a clear, exact and appropriate account of the whole matter of prayer, and what times are more opportune than others (νότοι καιροί νότων καιρών) for prayer."<sup>487</sup>

Quoting John 13,36 ("Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards") Origen accordingly states:

"You should understand that the same thing will be said to each one which has been given to the hands of the son by the father; yet [it will be said] according to a just proportion. Thus to each one will be said 'thou shalt follow me afterwards' but they will not all follow at the same time; for, in the expression 'thou shalt follow me afterwards', the word 'afterwards' is stated as pertaining not to the same opportune time (καιρός) for those who will follow him."<sup>488</sup>

In *commentarii* he clearly refers to the stages of a man's existential evolution towards his return to God in terms of "kairos":

" 'For all there is a time and a kairos for every thing under the heaven',<sup>489</sup> and there is some 'kairos to gather the precious stones together',<sup>490</sup> when it suits to go away and sell all one's belongings in order to buy that precious stone. For he who is destined to be wise must at first be introduced to the elements and further be educated by the elements and remain a long time studying them; yet he should not remain in the elements because he honoured them in the beginning, but he should go ahead 'to the perfection'<sup>491</sup> being grateful for the

introduction as having been useful to him at the earlier stages. Thus, it is the words of the law and the prophets that should be understood as elementary education when they are compared to the deeper understanding of the gospel as well as to every mentality which pertains to works or words about Jesus Christ."<sup>492</sup>

Thus the concept of *kairos* pertains not only to certain moments of God's action into the world but also to times of man's action in respect to his striving for salvation.<sup>493</sup>

**The notion of *kairos* and the character of Time.** In Origen's thought, it is of great significance not merely *what* is done but also *when* it is done. The enquiry into this "when" (that is, the deeper significance of "*kairos*") is to Origen so important that he considers it as a matter of high priority. Thus he refers to the Logos stating that what should be enquired is "of what nature he is and in what manner he is son of God and what are the causes of his descending to the level of human flesh and completely assuming humanity and what is his activity and towards whom and *when* it is exercised."<sup>494</sup>

The *kairos* at which a word is pronounced is a constitutive element of the truth of it. A word is "well pronounced" and, therefore, a word of "truth", only when it is pronounced at the appropriate time. If it is not pronounced at the appropriate time, then this "untimely" (οὐδὲ ἐν καιρῷ) pronunciation is not sufficient to produce beneficent results. In that case this word as pronounced "not well", that is as not helping towards the eschatological perspectives of a man.

Quoting Job, 27, 2, Origen states: "The devil assumed power upon Job and afflicted him night and day, formerly through those who were out of him, later through his body itself and after through his own friends. So, when (sc. the devil) tried this through his (sc. Job's) wife and Job was not defeated, the devil brought three friends, not being enemies nor holding malicious doctrines, but [holding] words which

were words of truth but they were pronounced not well and not at the opportune time. (οὐ καλῶς δέ, οὐδέ ἐν καιρῷ προσηγομένους)"<sup>493</sup>

Thus time constitutes a crucial element which directly affects the quality of moral action. Origen emphasizes this conception as he quotes Job 31,40-32,1 ("And Job stopped pronouncing words. So these three men ceased to answer Job. For he was righteous in their eyes."):

"It is not merely said that he stopped. For his heart, which was understanding the divine things, did not stop. For he knew that there is an opportune time (καιρός) for everything under the heaven, a kairos of being silent and a kairos of speaking. When, therefore, it was the kairos for him to answer to the three [friends], he was speaking; when, after he had stopped them up, it was kairos [for him to go silent], he went silent. And I think that the [expression] 'Job stopped' is said as a kind of praise."<sup>495</sup>

Thus, there is an essential relation between free moral action and kairos. This is why Origen holds that to take into account the kairos at which preaching of certain divine mysteries must be pronounced is an essential prerequisite for this preaching; for such a job is a "dangerous" and "precarious" one as one "who hears them" might be "harmed" if he hears those words at an untimely moment. So "he who is a steward of the mysteries of God"<sup>497</sup> ... should take into account the kairos at which he adduces those doctrines, so that he does not harm him who hear".<sup>498</sup>

Hence any action is considered as a right one, judged not only according to its content but also according to the time at which it takes place. This is why Origen regards as "beautiful" (as said by Isaiah and stated in Rom.10,15) what "has been done in the appropriate kairos".<sup>499</sup>

In the analysis above it is mainly from a point of view of *place* that an action has been examined and it has been sustained that time is



a constitutive element of the quality of an action which takes *place*. This means that what is mainly regarded is the content of an action in itself and what is requisite is the proper time for its realization. Nevertheless, Origen holds a view of *kairos* regarding the character of an action (which is inevitably a spatio-temporal occurrence) mainly from a point of view of *time*.

It is not only an action which requires the proper time for its appropriate realization; but it is also each time that requires the proper action, which is the appropriate way of acting for that particular moment of time. The conviction about human freedom as well as the particular cruciality of each *kairos*, lead Origen to this perception:

Each particular *kairos* requires the action which is appropriate to it, in view of the eschatological purpose of salvation. Hence it is not impossible that two different *kairoi* may require actions which, in themselves, would be opposite to each other.

This view can be found in *commJohn* opining on the question of "when one should contempt the dangers of dying".<sup>500</sup>

"We say that neither should we always avoid the dangers nor always run to meet them; to someone who is wise in Christ, it is necessary to test what the *kairos* is which demands him to go away and what [the *kairos*] is of willingness to fight, without going away and, much more, without flight".<sup>501</sup>

The same view is expressed in *Ce/s*:

"Jesus taught his disciples not to be rash, saying to them: 'If they persecute you in this city flee to another; and if they persecute you in that, flee again to another.'<sup>502</sup> And he gave them an example of his teaching by his tranquil life; he was careful not to meet dangers unnecessarily or at the wrong time or for no good reason."<sup>503</sup> At another point, this opinion is again explicated through the notion of

kairos:

"But he saw that it is very difficult to eradicate from a soul doctrines with which he was almost born and was brought up until he reached man's estate, and which persuade those who accept them that they are divine and that to overthrow them is impious. He perceived that it is hard to prove that they are 'dung' and 'loss'<sup>504</sup> compared with the pre-eminence of the knowledge that is according to Christ, that is the truth, so that those who heard would have been convinced. He therefore put it off until a more suitable time (εἰς ἐπιτηδαιότερον καιρόν) after his passion and resurrection. Moreover, it was really the wrong moment (ἄκαιρος) to bring help to people as yet unable to accept it, because possibly it might have destroyed the impression of Jesus which they had already gained, that he was Christ and son of the living God.<sup>505</sup>

Hence every moment of time demands a certain kind of action, which is appropriate to that particular moment. If the time is not "opportune" (εὐκαιρος), then even the best of things are unnecessary and even harmful, because that certain time requires the kind of action befitting this kairos. For example, at the time of Jesus, "the opportune time of the law and the prophets" had "passed away"; its "hour"<sup>506</sup> was "past" and, therefore, "it is not the kairos for that any more".<sup>507</sup>

This conception of "kairos" in Origen shows that time is not a morally colourless continuum in which free moral action takes place; but each particular moment is, in a particular way, related to this action. So, *the time of an action* is a constitutive element of the *quality of the action* itself.

It is upon the judgement of a "wise man in Christ"<sup>508</sup> to judge each time what is the action that a particular moment requires; that is, to discern what is the particular relation of that kairos to moral action and how the soteriological perspectives of man can be served in

the best way.

This very point directly stems from Origen's fundamental conviction about freedom of rational beings. The intervention of God in time in the various *kairoi* is mainly regarded as a result of the freedom of creatures. This result may be either a consummation of the world because of excessive extent of evil in the world or a response to God to a prayer<sup>509</sup> or the sending of a prophet to announce certain things and to educate people or any other action caused by creatures' action. It is therefore in the conception of *kairos*, too, that Origen's conception of time, as the means where the freedom of God and that of creatures come to a dialectical relation, can be traced as well as grounded.

In *seljud* Origen expresses his opinion that God's action in time takes place at the appropriate *kairos* according to the choice of his freedom and yet in relation to human action; and it is in view of this opinion that he quotes and interprets the passage in Ps.74,3 "When I deem that the appropriate time (*καίρῳ*) has come, then I will judge good deeds".<sup>510</sup> Accordingly, a rational creature "brings its fruit" at its "appropriate time" (*καίρῳ*), by "kairos of giving [fruits] meaning the better moral quality" of the creature.<sup>511</sup>

Thus, Origen's conception of *kairos* underlines the eschatological direction of the world in time. In this time there are "kairoi" of a major or less major significance. Incarnation is a major *kairos* and it occurred at a moment marking the consummation of a number of aeons. The appearances of the prophets also mark various "kairoi". The *apokatastasis* which marks the "end of the prophecy" is also a "kairos", while the "resurrection" of an individual rational creature also marks a "kairos" of his own life in time.<sup>512</sup>

In *commMatt* Origen provides an exegesis of Matt.20,1-16, stating that the "hours" of the day in the parable are respective to the

various "kairoi" of biblical history, namely to Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ,<sup>513</sup> the consummation of the aeon,<sup>514</sup> the outcome of the judgement,<sup>515</sup> and, finally, the "kingdom of God".<sup>516</sup>

Beyond those "points" in time, nevertheless, Origen's time is full of dots which mark the process of the return to God. Not only is an action "right" only once it takes place in the appropriate time and "wrong" and "harmful" (even if "good" in its content regarded in itself) if it takes place in a non-appropriate time. But also *each moment* demands an action appropriate to it. Origen's opinion is that the perspectives of moral action pertain to future time which is of enormous length, such as "a week of aeons" and "month of aeons" and "year of aeons".<sup>517</sup> Thus the perspectives of moral action refer to a future very long time, of which even "the smallest portion of an hour" actually means a period relatively long time. It is in respect of this perspectives that everyone should now and "here" do "everything, in order that after his preparation here he may be found worthy to attain to the 'daily' (ἐπιούσιος) bread in the day that is called 'today', and receive it 'day by day', it now being clear from the foregoing what the 'day by day' is".<sup>518</sup>

So it is not only *action* which seeks the right time to take place. It is also *time* which seeks to be "filled full" by the right action.

This slight distinction indicates exactly the spatio-temporal conception of reality by Origen. There are two elements which constitute the very existence of an occurrence. First, it is place; this is why it is said that an event takes *place*.<sup>519</sup> Secondly, it is *time*. An event becomes "reality" when the "fullness of time"<sup>520</sup> comes. It is therefore both space and time that concur and constitute the reality, the historicity, of an event.

What is usually done is to observe *space* and to look for the "coming" (or "fullness") of *time*. Origen did not neglect this, as we saw.

But what he further does is to observe each moment of *time* and to look forward to the occurrence of the right *event* in it. If this does not happen then the occurrences which happen before "the fulness of time" are "powerless" to serve the desirable purpose.<sup>521</sup>

This is a crucial point which is underlined by Origen's conception of *kairos*. Since the goal of "movement" (that is, moral action) in time has no other purpose than salvation, each moment of time is actually a *kairos* which has to be "filled full" by the appropriate action, that is the action which serves the eschatological perspectives of a rational being. Thus, besides the question of space's "fulness of time", in Origen there is also the question of time's "fulness of space", in the sense that a certain and appropriate action should take place at each moment as "there is nothing between committing sin and not committing sin".<sup>522</sup> "Fulness of space" means that each forthcoming moment in the continuum of time should be "filled full" by that action which serves the ultimate eschatological purpose, namely the return to God.

Hypothetically speaking, if each moment of time were "filled" by the appropriate action, then there would be no need for prolongation of time. Salvation does not take place at the end of *one* aeon only, just because this does not happen. Either a "right" action does not take place at all or it takes place at the wrong time - a case which virtually has the same effects as an action wrong in itself.

Thus Origen's time is not just a "line" which comes forth by "connecting" the "points" of the various "*kairoi*" of God's action in the world, as Cullmann holds about time.<sup>523</sup> On this subject, quite reasonable criticism has been exercised. J. Marsh, for example, argues that "It was, of course, possible in ancient Israel to join the *kairoi* that had then occurred; it is possible in modern, as in ancient Christianity: but we have no *temporal* line when we have made our

connexions. It results in serious confusion to use this 'line' of time as an argument to support a doctrine of eternity as an endless time".<sup>524</sup> This is a very reasonable objection. Cullmann could never be able to prove that the "line" between two "kairoi", the line which joins these two *points*, is *time* in itself. Certainly it is not the only contradiction in Cullmann's thought; we discuss other points of it further on in this work.

Our discussion of Origen's conception of kairos here shows that there can be no objection of this kind in Origen's conception of time. For in his view *all the moments* of time are "kairoi" in a sense. Certainly there is a classification of the significance of the various kairoi in time and Origen is clear in expressing this view. Beyond that, however, it is the cruciality of the dialectical relation between God and creatures that renders each moment of time as a crucial kairos demanding a certain action. This is exactly what constitutes the *dramatic* character of time.

When H. Puech says that "the world and its destiny stand in a direct relation to the will of God"<sup>525</sup> he says nothing more than what Origen said. When he says that "God is manifested in time. Each of his acts marks a kairos, a solemn and decisive moment in history" he just repeats what Origen said. But Origen has gone far more than scholars like Puech did. The "decisive moments" in history are actually *all* the moments of history, even though God is manifested only in a few of them. Even in our day no one (as neither Puech does) has portrayed the dramatic character of time in such a vivid way.

It is the fundamental eschatological conception of time which constitutes the cruciality of it. For the quality of every action is decisively coloured by the moment at which it takes place; that is, the quality of every action depends also on the kairos at which it takes place. Thus, it is through the notion of "kairos" that the cruciality of

the *temporal* element of an action (which action proper, as we said, is a spatio-temporal occurrence) is stressed. Finally it is the cruciality of time in itself which is vividly underlined by such a conception of "kairos"; and this cruciality is actually illuminated by the eschatological perspectives of moral action in time.

### Conclusion

The substantial question which was discussed in this chapter is how Origen perceives *function* in time and how and to what extent this perception is indicative of a certain *character* of time. All the four particular topics discussed in this chapter not only confirm Origen's conception of time as discussed in the previous chapters, but they also further elucidate certain aspects of it.

In order to portray our conclusions we can make a distinction between "anacyclogical" and "teleological" view of time.

The former indicates a time without any beginning or end, a time in which occurrences are regularly repeated; events just "happen" and "recur" in a purely natural sense and there is no any conception of them a constituting any kind of process towards a goal or "end" whatsoever.<sup>526</sup> In this time what is of main interest is the morally indifferent world and indeed thought is pre-eminently preoccupied with the ideal to *know* nature.

The latter indicates a time in which occurrences are not regularly repeated or even not repeated at all. As future is contingent, repetition or non-repetition of certain occurrences is a question of no particular significance. What is of crucial importance is the *quality* of these occurrences. Such a time is conceived as having both a beginning and an end -an end which also marks the "telos" of what we have discussed as "movement in time". This time is determined by the creation and the final consummation of the world. What constitutes the

measure and criterion of this quality lies in the fact that those occurrences are understood to be directed towards an end, both in a sense of attaining to a goal and termination of time. This end (τέλος) actually indicates the significance of the whole movement. Divine and creaturely will encounter each other in time and what is of main interest is not the morally indifferent *nature*<sup>327</sup> but the morally crucial character of *free action* of rational creatures. In this conception of time, the past prepares for and announces the future and the future accomplishes and explains the past. Past events bring in themselves "an image" (or "prefiguration") of the future ones.

The conclusion from the discussion in this chapter is that Origen's conception of time is a "teleological" one. His thought is mainly preoccupied with the cruciality of movement in time, especially the perspectives of this movement in the time to come. He firmly holds a conception of τέλος not only in the sense of "end", but, predominantly, in the sense of fulfilment of the promise and realization of expectation faith and hope. Thus his conception of time is fundamentally characterized by categories such as *providence - prophecy - promise - expectation - realization - faith - hope - waiting - fulfilment*. This succession of categories par excellence underlines the direction of free moral action in time towards an "end", which constitutes the salvation. So the entire course of history is actually the striving towards salvation. The entire world moves continuously from a "beginning" to an "end". The anacyclicological conception of time is rejected not only on the grounds of creaturely freedom but also because it is unacceptable to the teaching of the scriptures which teach about a beginning of the world, of the significance of its existence, of its duration and final aim and of its consummation. Besides, the conviction that the redemptive deed of Christ was an ἐφ' ἁνάξ occurrence which happened once and for all plays a decisive role in this teleological conception of time. What



happened at the time of Jesus was an event which in itself was performed for all the ages and it was actually a prefiguration of what will happen to the entire "body" of Christ, namely the entire world, at the end.

How Origen perceives human being throughout an aeon, what is the meaning that time acquired after the incarnation of Christ, how he considers the deeper meaning and significance of notions such as "prophecy" and "kairos" -all these show that his conception of time is pre-eminently characterized by the concern for the ultimate implications of free moral action. Time is the "means" where the will of God and that of rational creatures encounter each other and come to a dialectical relation. Thus action in time is not a purposeless natural event, but it is a meaningful process directed towards an "end". This is why Origen has "selected" those definitions of *τέλος* which are indicative of his conviction that it is the *τέλος* which decisively determines the quality of free moral action in time and, subsequently, his own conception of time; and it is his conception of "kairos" that most vividly underlines the cruciality of time in itself.

It is ironical therefore that, although H. Puech<sup>529</sup> portrays the Christian ideas on this question in a way actually expressing Origen's views, he adduces the name of Origen as an example of deviation from this conception of time and history. Likewise, the assertion of J. Daniélou<sup>529</sup> that Origen's kind of exegesis leads to the losing of its eschatological character, is absurd. On the contrary, we do agree with H. de Lubac<sup>530</sup> who quite correctly denies this allegation.

Our discussion so far has shown that there is a continuity of time and a discontinuity of space, not in the sense of space's movement in time<sup>531</sup> but in the sense that space is consisted of particular "spaces" distinct from one another.

Accordingly, movement in space-time has two directions:

One is "horizontal" and this is the direction towards the future. This is a continuous movement and, as far as a certain rational creature is concerned, it takes place throughout a certain rank of life. It is actually the movement along the temporal course or what is realized as the flux of time.

There is also another kind of movement, which we would call as a "vertical" one. This is discontinuous and takes place only at the end of each aeon. It is the movement from one rank of life to another, according to divine judgement. This is a movement from one particular "space" to another, namely a "transposition" from a certain rank of life to another. As the rank of life of a rational being at an ensuing aeon is determined only by divine judgement, this movement would not take place, in the event that a rational creature is found to deserve not to change rank of life but to continue to live in the same one in the aeon which begins at that moment. This kind of movement constitutes the realization of the "existential causality", as discussed in chapter 2.

Thus, as far as a certain rational creature is concerned, those two kinds of movement in space-time have different characteristics.

"Horizontal" movement takes place in a *certain space* (that is, the certain rank of life) and the rational creature moves from a moment of *time* to another moment of *time*. In this case it is the particular *space* which is constant. This movement is mainly regarded as free moral action. Thus, once the particular space in which a rational creature lives is given and constant for a period of an aeon, the cruciality of being in space-time is mainly underlined in terms of *time* -as it has particularly been discussed in this chapter.

"Vertical" movement takes place at a certain time (namely, at the moment of consummation and judgement) and it is a movement from a particular *space* to another particular *space*. In that case it is *time* which is constant, since the time of consummation and judgement is a

time of "non- duration". Here space in itself, as a certain rank of life, is of main interest, as the outcome of judgement is realized as a "transposition" from one particular space to another. Thus the cruciality of being in space-time is, in this case, underlined in terms of *space*.

We have hitherto discussed the conception of time in itself, its character, its relation to God, its relation to the structure of the world as well as its significance as assumed from how occurrences in time are considered and regarded. In having done so, it is mainly the "horizontal" movement in Origen's time which has actually been examined. This was inevitable since the whole discussion was about time in itself, as an "extension" which is "extended alongside with the structure of this world". What we have not discussed however, but only alluded to, is what we have called "vertical" movement in Origen's space-time.

While the ultimate possibility of the "horizontal" movement (that is, the movement towards the future) is the "end" of time itself, what are the ultimate possibilities of the "vertical" movement in Origen's space-time? The enquiry of this question leads us to the discussion of the meaning (or, meanings) of the notion of *eternal* in Origen's thought.

### **§1. Eternal life.**

Origen's conception of eternal life should be regarded in the context of his perception of the world consisting of particular "worlds" or spaces of different quality from each other. His general view is that "the entire universe of things that exist, both celestial and supercelestial, earthly and infernal may be spoken of in a general way as a single perfect world, within which or by which those other worlds that are in it must be supposed to be contained".<sup>1</sup> In the Latin rendering of *Princ* there is a reference to the Greek "Apocalypse of Baruch" in which "seven worlds or heavens" are asserted to exist; it is also stated there that "above" all these "worlds" "there is another one", which encloses all the other "spheres in its yet more magnificent circuit, so that all things are within it as this earth of ours is under the heaven".<sup>2</sup>

This view, however, is not fully Origen's. For, in his works in Greek, he refers explicitly to this pagan notion of "seven heavens" stating that it cannot be accepted by Christians as it is nowhere found in the scriptures.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he says that although there are "heavens", he does not know "how many" they are.<sup>4</sup> This consideration actually stems from his conviction that it is "above our nature" to know how many the ranks of life are and what their exact classification is.<sup>5</sup> Thus he quite often refers to "heavens" in contradistinction to the one "heaven",<sup>6</sup> but he nowhere attempts what he regards as impossible, namely to say how many these "heavens" are.

As for the scriptural grounding of this view, he appeals to Paul who speaks of Christ who "ascended up far above all heavens" (Eph.4,10), the term "heavens" being in the Plural. Henceforth he employs the scriptural narration of the "ladder" which was seen in a

vision by Jacob.<sup>7</sup> The figure of this ladder reaching to heaven and angels ascending and descending on it and the Lord standing on its top suits him best, as it very much fits in with his conception of the world.<sup>8</sup>

In view of this world-picture, Origen's conception of eternal life is to live in the highest rank of life of this world.

This world which is supposed to be "above" all the particular spaces of this "single perfect world" is regarded as "the sphere" which "is called in the holy scriptures 'good land' and 'land of the living'.<sup>9</sup> This particular "world ... has its own heaven ... in which the names of the saints are said to be written, or to have been written by the Saviour.<sup>10</sup> This is the heaven "which contains and encloses that 'earth' which the Saviour in the gospel promises to the 'meek' and 'gentle'.<sup>11</sup> This is another world which "excels in quality and glory but is nevertheless contained within the limits of this world".<sup>12</sup>

In Origen's view "there is another 'heaven' and another 'earth' besides the firmament, which is said to have been made after the second day, and the 'dry land', which was afterwards called 'earth' ". So "this earth of ours, which was formerly called 'dry land', took its new name from that earth, just as our firmament was called 'heaven' after the designation of that heaven.<sup>13</sup> "There is also that other earth, of which the scripture speaks, the one that flows with milk and honey, which the Saviour in the Gospel promises to the meek, when he says: 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth'. This earth which we inhabit is in its true designation called the 'dry land'; just as the heaven which we behold is properly called the firmament. But the firmament takes the name of heaven from the appellation of that other heaven, as the scripture teaches in Genesis".<sup>14</sup>

Accordingly, at another point, Origen reiterates that the saying "In the beginning God made heaven and earth"<sup>15</sup> refers to the very

beginning of creation and asserts that "that heaven and that earth there spoken of" pertain to this highest particular world and they "exist as a dwelling place and rest for the pious, so that the saints and the meek may be the first to obtain an inheritance on that earth."<sup>16</sup>

That world is "a world of saints and of those who have been completely purified and not of the wicked, as our world is."<sup>17</sup>

The scriptural basis for the notion of that world is sought in Paul, who says that "if the earthly house of this our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens".<sup>18</sup> There is also appeal to the Old Testament arguing that "when it is said elsewhere, 'Because I shall see the heaven, the works of thy fingers'<sup>19</sup> and when God said through the prophet about all visible things that 'My hand made all these',<sup>20</sup> he declares that that 'eternal house' which he promises to the saints in heaven was not 'made with hands', which undoubtedly signifies a difference in creation between the 'things which are seen' and the 'things which are not seen'".<sup>21</sup>

Thus the perception of the promised "eternal life" pertains to "that heaven and earth" in which "the *end and perfection* of all things may find a safe and most sure abode. There, for instance, those who have for their offences endured the sharp reproof of punishments by way of purgation and have fulfilled and discharged every obligation may be found worthy of a dwelling-place in the 'earth'; while those who have been obedient to the word of God and have already here by their submission shown themselves receptive to his wisdom may be said to gain the kingdom of that heaven or heavens. Thus a worthier fulfilment may be found for the saying, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the kingdom of heaven'<sup>22</sup> and for what was said in the psalm 'He shall exalt thee, and thou shalt inherit the earth'.<sup>23</sup> For we speak of descending to this earth, but of being 'exalted' to that one, which is on

high."<sup>24</sup>

Thus when Origen speaks of eternal life he does not only refer to a personal experience (according to scriptural affirmations of eternal life being *within* men)<sup>25</sup> but he also holds a perception of eternal life as *another world*, namely the highest of the ranks of life which comprise the entire world. This world is portrayed by expressions such as "To this land belongs that heaven which, with its more magnificent circuit, surrounds and confines it, and this is *the true heaven and the first so to be called*."<sup>26</sup>

According to this perception, he speaks of the "kingdom of heavens" in a twofold sense.

First, he regards this notion as pertaining to the existential "atmosphere", so to speak, of the eternal life, as a personal experience of a human being. This experience is mainly coloured by characteristics such as wisdom, logos, truth -which indeed are conceptions of Christ himself. Thus, in some passages, Origen points out that this "kingdom" is Christ himself.<sup>27</sup> Although this "kingdom" is mainly understood as "the goods to be enjoyed *after* the resurrection" (τά μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἀγαθά), it can also be understood as the "preaching" (τὸ κήρυγμα).<sup>28</sup> Regarded as a personal experience this "kingdom of heavens" is not held to be "in some other place" but in the "disposition" (οὐκ ἐν τόπῳ ἐστίν, ἐν δέ διαθέσει)<sup>29</sup> of a man who accepts and realizes the "virtuous life" (ἐνάρπτος ζωή),<sup>30</sup> according to the scriptural saying that this kingdom of heaven is *within* men. Accordingly, he states that "it is a habit in scripture to name contemplation of the aeon to come as kingdom of heavens".<sup>31</sup>

Beyond this perception, however, Origen emphasizes that this "kingdom" of God, although experienced now to a certain extent through a personal experience, it is itself the existential atmosphere of the particular world appropriate to it, namely the eternal life. Thus in the

Fragment XXXVI from his *commJohn*, quoting John 3,5 ("Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"), he develops this distinction as follows:

"As kingdom of God one should understand the status of those who duly live according to his laws. And this [kingdom] will have its abode in the place appropriate to it, and by that I mean *the place in the heavens* ; but since [this kingdom] is here named as kingdom of God whereas in Matthew it is named as kingdom of heavens,<sup>32</sup> it should be said that Matthew names it in respect of those who are under the reign rather than *the places where they live* whereas John and Luke<sup>33</sup> have named it regard to God who reigns. It is like speaking of the kingdom of Romans when we name it so regarding those who are ruled and denote this either by the place when *the territory* of it is meant, or denote it by the people participating in it."<sup>34</sup>

Although eternal life may (in a sense, and to a certain extent) be personally experienced in the human rank of life, yet that life in itself is a "world" of its own. Hence eternal life is determined by a *there*. This is a point which Origen makes in *se/Deut*. He maintains his view of eternal life consistently as the "earth" which is "the promised land"<sup>35</sup> being in a certain *there*. This is how he comments on a passage in Deuteronomy 8,7 ("For the Lord your God will introduce you in an earth which is good and fruitful"):

"It was not that [kind of earth] which Christ has promised to us rather [he promised us] the kingdom of heavens, an earth good and eternal, whose watersource is Christ who waters by the nourishment of wisdom. ... *There* is the wheat which supports the human heart ... *There* is Christ, the real vineyard. *There* is the oil which anoints the heads of the saints. ... *There* is the fig-tree, not the fruitless and having just long leaves, but that which is rich by the sweetness of the



spirit. *There* is the desirable sweetness of the Saviour's pharynx and the bride's lips, as in the song [of Solomon], which let honeycomb fall drop by drop and [*there* are] the holy stones (ἁγιοὶ οἱ ἄγιοι), who, during their life on the earth, were unyielding to temptations although they have lived amidst them and thus were imitating the nature of iron. *There* are the pieces of copper, from which [those holy stones] have constructed their intelligible armour [against those temptations]. And their principal work is to bless God ceaselessly."<sup>36</sup>

Thus, although Origen stresses that the eternal life is to be reached in the future (since he regards it as a *promised* land), he stresses that rational beings (here called "holy stones") live there *now*. What he stresses, nevertheless, is that this eternal life is another space of the world and this is why it is stated as being *there* (ἐκεῖ). When Origen speaks of "another aeon", in contradistinction to "this aeon", he understands this "another" aeon not only as a future time but also as "another world" in another space into which *will* be transposed those who are not there *yet*. This is the sense in which the aeon to come constitutes a *hope*. It is exactly this notion by which his spatio-temporal perception of reality is underlined. Thus he understands and uses the term "aeon" both in the sense of a temporal "age" and in a spatial sense, namely as "world".

In *homJer* he clearly states that "aeon" has also a spatial meaning, namely "world" and says that the "kingdom of God" is not to be found "in this aeon", namely "this world", but it comes from "the higher spaces" of this world (οὐκ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ τῶν κρείττονων χωρίων).<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, when he speaks of "a new aeon which is hoped for" (καινός αἰὼν ἐστὶν ἐλπιζόμενος) it is by the term "hoped" (ἐλπιζόμενος) that he denotes the temporal character of this "aeon", namely that it will occur in the future; yet he immediately appeals to Isaiah in order

to explain that this "aeon" is "a new heaven and a new earth"<sup>38</sup> and he further reiterates the also spatial character of this "aeon" stating that "there" (ἐκεῖ) (not *then*) "life is totally different and truly blessed" and his further references to that "aeon" are introduced by a *there* (ἐκεῖ) and not by any *then*.<sup>39</sup>

Indeed Origen affirms that the term "earth" (γῆ) is a "homonym"<sup>40</sup> as there are different realities denoted through the use of the same term. Yet, in as much as eternal life is denoted by the term "earth" or "aeon", this reality is understood to be not only *in another world* but also *in the future time*. This means that in Origen's thought there is a fundamental connexion between Here and Now, on the one hand, and There and Then, on the other.<sup>41</sup> A human being can attain to a taste of the existential "atmosphere" of eternal life through a personal experience, yet this is only a limited taste of the eternal life which is perceived as an actual reality, namely as *another space* of the world.

In chapter 2 we discussed Origen's conception of "aeon" (αἰών) as mainly meaning "time". What we see here is that the same term "aeon" has also the meaning of a particular "space" of those which comprise the world. Bearing in mind Origen's conception of the world through the figure of the "ladder" of Jacob on the top of which Christ is standing, one can see what Origen means when he speaks of the "span" (διάστημα) from here, namely the earth, up to the "angels who have been elevated" in higher spaces in the topmost of which is Christ himself.<sup>42</sup>

It is in the light of this conception that "eternal life" is stated to be "Christ himself".<sup>43</sup>

In a significant passage in *Cels.*, Origen depicts his perception of eternal life mainly in spatial terms emphasizing the fact that this life is *into* the world. Speaking of the human beings who die during the

consummation of an aeon, he argues that this may be taken to mean that these beings are certainly "banished out of the world" only when one takes "world" to mean just the earth. In fact, however, they "are not taken out of the world" but the Logos takes a human being "out of this earthly existence and transfers him to the world beyond the heaven for the contemplation of the realm of goods" (τοῦ λόγου αὐτὸν υπεξάχοντος ἐντεύθεν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν υπερουράνιον ἐπὶ τῇ θεᾷ τῶν καλῶν μετατιθέντος τόπον).<sup>44</sup> What Origen clearly implies here is that eternal life, although *beyond this visible world*, and "beyond the heaven", it is however a particular space *into the world* and indeed it is a place from which a certain kind of contemplation is possible.

Hence eternal life is defined not only by a *then*, but it is also regarded as another world and mode of life determined by a *there*, namely the highest rank of life of the world.

Once, therefore, eternal life is life *in* this world, it should be separated from divine life by the same "chasm", through the figure of which divine reality is understood to be transcendent to the world. Indeed, Origen holds that to speak of "higher" place has a relative meaning as it refers to its relative *quality* with respect to other (namely, "lower") ranks of life of the world. For although the world is entirely "material" and "comprises various spaces", yet they all are regarded as being "down" compared to the divine life; and this *down*, "does not imply any *spatial* comparison" but a *qualitative* one to what is "invisible",<sup>45</sup> namely incorporeal.

It is due to this conception of eternal life that Origen uses spatial terms in order to depict the relative position of a rational creature in this "life" in comparison to other spaces in the world. The most usual terms used for this purpose are those of "ascending" or "descending", as he deems these metaphorical notions as the most appropriate to express the status of eternal life as well as the dynamic

related to it. We emphasize, however, that the use of spatial terms should not be regarded in terms of the three-dimensions visible firmament, namely as indicating geometrical distances. For, as discussed in chapter 1, the differences between the particular "spaces" of the world are *qualitative* and not strictly *geometrical*. This means that another rank of life is not to be found in a certain geometrical "distance" from the visible world. Speaking in a strict spatial sense, Origen avers that these spaces are here *on the earth*, as we have seen. In view of this, when he uses spatial terms he does so implying the *qualitative difference* of the particular worlds and not any geometrical distance.

This is what he suggests through statements like this: "Like there are differences among those down, since there are references to the lowest, so there are differences among those high, as there are references to inheritance of the kingdom of heavens; all the heavens to be inherited are up, but they are not all equally up."<sup>46</sup> This is the sense in which eternal life is regarded as the topmost heaven and the "true heaven and the first".<sup>47</sup>

It is of particular significance to see how Origen not only uses spatial terms in order to allude to his notion of eternal life, but also classifies those terms in order to allude to different stages of this "ascending". In *se/Ps* he comments on the Psalm 23,3 ("Who shall ascend into the hill of Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?") and he suggests that this passage should be compared to that in Psalms,14,1 ("Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"). The remark which he makes out of this comparison is that, in the former passage, one first ascends to the hill of Lord and then stands in his holy place; in the latter passage, one first abides in the tabernacle of God and then dwells in his holy hill.

Thus there are three categories to be considered. First, "to

ascend into the hill of Lord"; secondly, "to dwell in the holy hill"; and thirdly, "to stand in the holy place of God".

It is certainly not incidental that Origen adduces the second passage in order to reflect as to what happens "first" and what "second", what is "preceding" and what is "subsequent". For those three categories, expressed allegorically here, allude to three very significant notions of Origen's conception of time and they will be discussed later in this chapter. What is of significance at this point is Origen's view that "one dwells in *many places* before he ascends to the holy mountain of God." (νοῦν ἅ τις παρῳκεῖ, ἕως οὐ ἔλθῃ εἰς τό ἅγιον ὄρος τοῦ Θεοῦ).<sup>48</sup> We discuss this conception of "holy mountain" in chapter 5, §3, quoting a passage in *se/ps*, 60, by which it is explained that this "holy mountain" is eternal life itself; however there is also a notion of *after* the eternal life -a notion which constitutes a pivotal point for understanding Origen's eschatological ideas, as we shall see.

On the particular subject which we are discussing now (namely, the use of spatial terms in speaking of the eternal life) Origen comments as follows:

"And it is the ultimate good (τελειόν ἀγαθόν) of the Lord and God the Logos himself that he (sc. David) names as hill; ... and when he becomes perfect and there is no room for further perfection, he stands firm being himself a holy place of God. For he ascends walking after the Lord 'forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before', having the worthy goal (τέλος ἔχων ἀγαθόν) of standing next to God in a holy *place* of his (ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ)".<sup>49</sup>

Quite clearly Origen relates the conception of this *end* to a conception of another *place*. Nevertheless, the view of eternal life as being *in* the world (and therefore out of God) like the rest of the world, is again suggested here. For he does not say that the rational

being will stand "with God" nor does he say that he will stand "in God"; he says "next to God" (μετά Θεόν). The difference is quite significant as it underlines Origen's view of the eternal life in relation to the divine reality.

Those categories are considered in a twofold way, namely in the same sense that the "kingdom of God" is perceived. They may allude to a personal experience while being in the human rank of life. In that case this experience is limited by the human nature itself. They also may suggest the eschatological reality, as an objective status of the world in the time to come. This is why Origen deems that a human being can experience those eschatological realities now, yet this is possible only to a certain extent as these experiences are subject to limitations due to human nature itself or (if they are referred to creatures of higher ranks of life as well) they are subject to the limitations that corporeality itself imposes to rational creatures.

What, therefore, is stated in the passage above may pertain to human rank of life, as a personal procedure during a lifetime -and accordingly Origen states: "Judas ascended to the hill of Lord, but he did not stand in his holy place".<sup>50</sup> Yet he goes on to state that what the passage above signifies is eschatological promises (ἐπαγγελιών), to be fulfilled in the time to come.

So he refers to the "ascent" to this "high" rank of life in an objective (that is, in an eschatological, yet real and historical) sense. It does not just mean a foretaste of that by means of a personal experience. Thus, quoting Matt.5,5 he states that "Earth is the *high* inheritance of those 'who live' and inherit their bodies in a glorious and incorruptible form."<sup>51</sup>

In *Cels* there is a reference to the efforts to make the ascent to eternal life by those who "have done everything possible that they might let nothing impure enter their rational nature" so that "they

might appear worthy of progressing to the divine realm and be drawn up by the Logos to the supreme blessedness of all and, if I may so express it, to the mountain-summit of goodness." (ἐνί τήν ανωτάτω πάντων μακαριότητα καί, ἐν' οὕτως ονομάσω, ακρώρειαν τών αγαθών).<sup>52</sup>

This is what is also called "topmost heavens", a place of "contemplation",<sup>53</sup> which nevertheless is *in* the world.<sup>54</sup> This is why he regards that the use of the verb "raised up" (ὑψωσε)<sup>55</sup> is "appropriate to [express] perfection".<sup>56</sup>

**Eternal life as "end".** Referring to the personal perspective of individual rational creatures, Origen applies the term "end" (τέλος) to it in the sense of achievement of a personal aim. The very fact of ascending to the supreme rank of life after a consummation and judgement constitutes an "end" for a rational being. This "end", however, has no so much a temporal meaning (although it does not lack a temporal meaning, too) but it mainly denotes the "last" (in the sense of highest) rank of life as well as the achievement of an existential goal in a rational being's life. This is the sense in which eternal life is portrayed as an "ultimate good (τελικόν αγαθόν)" and a rational creature as "having the worthy goal (τέλος) of standing next to God in a holy place of his",<sup>57</sup> and also as a particular world having its "heaven and earth"<sup>58</sup> in which "the *end and perfection* of all things may find a safe and most sure abode".<sup>59</sup>

Commenting on John,4,36, Origen refers to God who, after judgement brings all those who merit it "to one and the same *end*"<sup>60</sup> which is the "*eternal life*".<sup>61</sup> In like a manner he comments on Psalms, 48,9:

"He who strives throughout his lifetime in the life here, will at the *end* live the real life and will not face destruction." And "he who toils with [his] actions will at the *end* live through knowledge. ... For this is the meaning of 'at the end'.<sup>62</sup> ... And as *end* you should

understand the next aeon which is the end of the present one. For he who here had a hard and toilsome life, will be found worthy of living the *promised* life in the aeon to come, and he will not face destruction".<sup>63</sup>

Origen explains his meaning further in the same work: "When he who is aware of the doctrine of the judgement to come sees the wise people dying, he does not regard it as a destruction of both soul and body ... but [he regards this death] as *a removal to another world*" (μετοκίαν εἰς κόσμον ἕτερον).<sup>64</sup>

Commenting on the Psalm 139,13-14 ("I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor. Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence."), he states: "This is a prophecy of the judgement to come, in which the impious will be thrown to fire whereas the just will be taken up to a relaxed life (εἰς ἀνεσθῆναι). ... Solomon also said 'For God will bring in judgement everything that has been done'.<sup>65</sup> And [David] has concluded this [psalm], which is entitled "to the *end*" (εἰς τέλος), by alluding to the *hope* maintained by the just."<sup>66</sup>

The actual sense in which Origen comprehends the notion of "end" into this context, is stated by himself:

"As with every art and science there is an end (τέλος), towards which he who exercises this art of science is looking, so there must be an end (τέλος) for rational nature",<sup>67</sup> which is understood in a qualitative sense, namely the abolition of evil.

Due to the eschatological orientation of his thought, he primarily regards free moral action in its future perspectives. This is why he maintains that human life should mainly be seen in the light of its being "in the future time"; for "it is then that it will pre-eminently praise God".<sup>68</sup> In the prolonged time of Origen sins will be forgiven "later or sooner".<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, the "end" will be the same for all,



either they now are sinful or pious, because there is "one *end* from one God through one Christ in one Holy Spirit, being reserved for either of them".<sup>70</sup> This view is expressed exactly at the point where he quotes John 4,36, explaining that this "end" is the meaning of "eternal life" stated there.

So, in this meaning, "end" means the ascent of an individual rational creature to the supreme rank of life. This attaining to eternal life constitutes a sense of "salvation" as Origen directly relates the notions of "end" (or, "blessed end"), "eternal life" and "salvation".<sup>71</sup>

Thus attaining to eternal life is portrayed as "transition" to the supreme rank of life. This is an "end" (τέλος) which is also called "high mountain ridge" (ακρόπειαν).<sup>72</sup> Hence, when he refers to this kind of life, he uses the term "eternal" (αἰώνιος) either with verbs denoting a spatial transition ("...he was a supplier of joy, as he forgave sins and *transposed* those who heard to eternal life...")<sup>73</sup> or he uses the term "eternal" correlated to place ("...we admit that he can provide an eternal *residence* (βιοτήν) for the soul, and say not only that he can but that he actually does so. ).<sup>74</sup>

This latter passage implies also the perception of eternal life as a space which will be reached *in the future* by those who are not in that rank of life *now*. However, there are rational creatures who already *are* in that rank of life as a result of their deeds during the previous aeon. This is the meaning of the Present tense *παρέχεται* ("provides") which Origen uses in order to emphasize that God not only *will* raise rational beings to eternal life, but he has already done it and there are *now* rational creatures living there.

**Eternal life as contemplation.** Once the character of eternal life, as a rank of life, has been determined, the question arising relates to the existential status of those who are transposed there. A main existential characteristic of rational beings at that rank of life is the

contemplation of the divine wisdom.

Attaining to eternal life is portrayed as a transposition to a "place" from which is "beyond the heaven for the contemplation of the realm of goods (τῶν καλῶν)"<sup>75</sup> and yet this is a place // the world.

This highest "place", therefore, is one from which "contemplation" (θεᾶν) of "goods" (τῶν καλῶν) is possible. Indeed, in the same work Origen articulates how he comprehends those "eternal" things which are "contemplated" from the point of view of "eternal life".

"At any rate, our Paul, who was educated in those prophetic writings and desired the things of the higher world and the region beyond the heavens, and always acted in the light of those things that he might attain to them, says in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians: 'For our slight affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; meanwhile we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen are transitory'<sup>76</sup> but the things which are not seen are eternal.'<sup>77</sup>

To those who can understand he calls those things sensible as 'seen' and those intelligible and comprehended only by mind as 'not seen'; he also knows that those things sensible are 'transient' and 'seen' whereas the intelligible are 'not seen';<sup>78</sup> Desiring to continue in the *contemplation* (θεᾶ) of these things and being helped by his longing for them, he regarded all affliction as nothing and as something light. Even at the very time of affliction and troubles he was in no way weighed down by them, but made light of every difficulty because he was *contemplating* (θεᾶν) these things. For we have a great high priest who by the greatness of his power and of his mind 'has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God'<sup>79</sup> who told those that had genuinely learnt the things of God and who lived lives worthy of them that he

would lead them on to realities beyond this world.

So he says: 'That where I go, you may be also'.<sup>80</sup> On this account we *hope* that after the 'troubles and strivings'<sup>81</sup> here we shall come to the *topmost heavens* (πρός ἄκροις γενέσθαι τοῖς οὐρανοῖς), and according to the teaching of Jesus will receive 'springs of water springing up to eternal life',<sup>82</sup> and will have the capacity for rivers of *visions* (θεωρημάτων), and will be with the waters that are said to be 'above the heavens' which 'praise the name of the Lord'.<sup>83</sup> As long as we praise him, we shall not be carried about away from 'the circumference of the heaven',<sup>84</sup> but we shall always (αἰί) be engaged in the *contemplation* (θεά) of the invisible things of God, which will no longer be understood by us 'from the creation of the world by the things that are made'<sup>85</sup> but, as the genuine disciple of Jesus expressed it, when he said 'But then face to face'; and 'When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away'.<sup>86</sup>

Thus Origen directly relates the notion of "eternal life" to the notion of "contemplating" "the invisible things of God". In order to see how Origen regards those "invisible things of God", we should recall our analyses in chapter 1, where we have asserted that those "invisible things" are the wisdom of God. Therefore this contemplation is to clearest possible view of the wisdom of God. This view can be found in the *exhMar* where he states:

"Why, then, do we hesitate and doubt to put off the corruptible body that hinders us and weighs down the soul, the 'earthly tabernacle' that fills the mind full of many anxieties,<sup>87</sup> and to be set free from our bonds and to retire from the stormy waves that are the lot of flesh and blood? For then we may enjoy with Christ Jesus the rest which accompanies blessedness, and *contemplate* (θεωροῦντες) him in his wholeness, the living Logos. Fed by him and comprehending the manifold wisdom in him, and being stamped with the very truth, we may have our

minds enlightened by the true and unfailing light of knowledge and have the *vision* (θεάν) of those things which by that light can be seen by eyes illuminated by the commandment of the Lord."<sup>88</sup>

Thus eternal life is related fundamentally to a "contemplation" (θεωρία) of divine wisdom in the most clear way, to the extent it is possible from a point of view being *in* the world. The very term *θεωρία* denotes what is to be enjoyed once a rational creature is found worthy of being transposed to the eternal life.<sup>89</sup>

Quoting Ps.142,8 ("cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee") he comments as follows:

"He seeks the contemplation of the aeon to come, which in the Scripture is also usually called kingdom of heavens." He further adds that this psalm pertains to "the learning of the road ... on which one walks after he goes out of this life"; and the final destination is an "Earth of the living" (Γῆ ζώντων) where "the Holy Spirit of God leads those who deserve it".<sup>90</sup>

Commenting on Mat.17,1ff ("And after six days Jesus takes Peter, James and John his brother, and brings them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them") Origen states that the term "high mountain" alludes to the eternal life where "apart" (κατ' ἰδίαν) one may "contemplate" (θεωρήσῃ) the glory of Christ. And the expression "after six days" was said "not in vain" as the world was made in six days and, therefore, in order to reach those "eternal" ones has to go through those six days and finally he "will find himself in a new sabbath in a high mountain, delighted in seeing Christ transfigured in front of him".<sup>91</sup> An extensive part of this section is devoted to the articulation of the view that what rational creatures contemplate from the eternal life's point of view is Christ as the Wisdom of God.<sup>92</sup>

Thus, eternal life is a place from where rational beings enjoy the best "sight" of the wisdom of God. It should be emphasized,

however, that this is just the best sight *possible* from a temporal point of view, namely from a place *in* the world. For Origen holds that corporeality in itself is a factor preventing creatures from "seeing" God Himself.<sup>93</sup> This is a fundamental conviction which is directly related to the conception of a "chasm" between God and the world, namely of God as radically transcendent to the world.

Thus mystical experience cannot substitute what is portrayed as an actual perspective of rational creatures through an actual process in space-time. For, eternal life "*now* ... is found in shadow, but *then* it will be found face to face" by virtue of the fact that eternal life is "Christ himself".<sup>94</sup>

In view of this, R. Sorabji's assertion<sup>95</sup> that Origen "fears" that a human being could feel "satiety" due to his progress in mystical experience, is wrong. R. Sorabji has not grasped that in Origen "progress" is only limitedly perceived as "mystical experience". The actual progress is perceived as a spatio-temporal movement, according to the existential causality. At that point Sorabji has confused the "progress" either as a personal experience or as a real spatio-temporal perspective.<sup>96</sup> It is Origen himself who enunciates that mystical experience will never be satisfied, because of man's limited ability to comprehend the divine mysteries. For there are certain  $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  in wisdom which can be comprehended by no created nature.<sup>97</sup> The "knowledge" of the multitude of  $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$  about God is "endless" ( $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\kappa\tau\omicron\nu$ ), not only for "human nature" but also for all creatures.<sup>98</sup> In searching for the divine truth, one may find the "depth" of certain words. But "if he rests for a while" he will thereafter find new questions before him; and once they are answered, he will find new questions, and so on.<sup>99</sup>

In that section of R. Sorabji's book<sup>100</sup> there is a quotation where Gregory of Nyssa affirms that personal progress towards the

search of God is unlimited. It is quite ironical that Sorabji regards this passage "as something of an *answer* to Origen".<sup>101</sup> For this view of Gregory's is but a view of Origen. Gregory does not *answer* to Origen, he just *repeats* the view of his master -whom he so much admired.

In fact this is one more point on which Origen takes a view diametrically opposite from Plato's:

"Plato may say that it is difficult to find the maker and father of the universe, indicating that it is not impossible for human nature to find God in a degree worthy of Him, or, if not worthy of Him, yet at least in a degree higher than that of the multitude. ... But we affirm that human nature is not sufficient in any way to seek for God and to find Him in His pure nature, unless it is helped by the God who is object of the search. And He is found by those who, after doing what they can, admit that they need Him, and shows Himself to those to whom He judges right to appear, so far as it is possible for God to be known to man and for the human soul which is still in a body to know God."<sup>102</sup>

If a man "contemplates" the wisdom of God "during the present aeon", this is not an actual state of contemplation but a personal experience. In this sense this contemplation is very near to a figure of speech (ἐν μὲν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι ... ἢ νοητῇ τῆς σοφίας θεωρία). But in the "aeon to come" this will be a real spatio-temporal (and not just a personal experience and, therefore, an incomplete) state.<sup>103</sup>

Speaking of eternal life, in Origen's thought the real contrast is always between Here-Now and There-Then.<sup>104</sup> This spatio-temporal perspective cannot be substituted by any mystical experience, which is bound to be endlessly incomplete due to the fact that a human being seeks to see God *Here and Now*. Paul's affirmation about *now* seeing God "through a glass" is quite often contrasted to the *future* "face to face".<sup>105</sup>

Commenting on John 1,16 ("And of his fulness have all we

received") Origen makes the following point:

"You should remark the exactness of what has been written. It is not said 'his fulness', but 'And of his fulness have we all received'. For those who, in this life participate in sanctity and knowledge and truth [are said to] know a part and to prophesy from a part of his fulness,<sup>106</sup> but they have not his fulness. They could nevertheless acquire it after this temporary life in the aeons to come, according to the apostle,<sup>107</sup> for he says "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away".<sup>108</sup> In the catholic [epistle] of John it has been accordingly said; 'and it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is',<sup>109</sup> which means; [we shall see him] *in the way it is possible to creatures to know God* (καθώς ἐστι δυνατόν τοῖς γενητοῖς γινῶναι τόν Θεόν). For it is not possible to understand the [expression] 'as he is' as meaning *God in Himself* (οὐ γάρ οἶόν τε ἐκλαμβάνειν τό καθώς ἐστίν ὁ Θεός αὐτός). We shall acquire something more than our present situation, as we shall become able to see not what is part, but being naked of any ignorance, the purest truth, as we shall see him *as much as is possible* (κατά τό δυνατόν αὐτόν ὁψόμενοι)."<sup>110</sup>

What actually Origen does here is to articulate his views in a way preserving his fundamental conception of the radical transcendence of God to the world and a notion of *God Himself*, who is beyond any possibility of being known by any creature, no matter how "high" it is. This is particularly underlined in the passage above. Indeed, he is particularly cautious in affirming that although "contemplation" of God from the eternal life's point of view is a superior one, yet it is a view of God from *within* the world; it is exactly due to this fact that God cannot be seen as he is *in Himself* and this is why Origen actually takes the scriptural passage of "seeing" God as actually meaning "seeing

God as far as it is possible" from a place located into the world, namely from an existential status where corporeality and the subsequent radical separation from the divine being is still maintained.

Hence, what Origen regards as eternal life is the existential status of a rational creature who has got rid of all sin and has ascended into the supreme rank of life, from where the wisdom of God is contemplated in the best way possible. This is what Origen regards as "end" of an individual rational creature.

**The conception of eternal life and Greek thought.** Origen is conscious of the fact that his view of eternal life might be taken as similar to certain doctrines of the Greeks, namely Pythagoreans and Platonists. It is himself who declares that he knows what Plato says in *Phaedrus*.<sup>111</sup> Through his answer to that point, his teleological view of time is again reaffirmed; for action in time is held to be directed by the *hope* of reaching an *goal*, in the sense of an *expected end*:

"Celsus says that Christians are led away with vain hopes, and attacks the doctrine of the blessed life and of fellowship with God. We answer to him thus. My good man, the implication of your attack is that both the Pythagoreans and the Platonists are led away with vain hopes in believing the doctrine that the soul can ascend to the arc of heaven and in the region above the heavens gaze on the things seen by the blessed spectators.<sup>112</sup> By that you say, Celsus, those also who believe in the survival of the soul and who live so that they may become heroes and enjoy the company of the gods, are led away with vain hopes.<sup>113</sup> And probably also those who have been convinced that the mind from without<sup>114</sup> is immortal and will alone have life after death, would be said by Celsus to be led way with vain hopes."<sup>115</sup>

At another point he affirms that it is not his purpose "to raise objections to any good teachings, even if their authors are outside the faith, nor to seek an occasion for a dispute with them, nor to find a



way of overthrowing statements which are sound."<sup>116</sup> In respect of this, he states:

"Celsus, then, supposes that we have taken the doctrine about the other earth, which is better and far superior to this one, from certain men of ancient times whom he regards as divinely inspired, and in particular from Plato, who in the *Phaedo* spoke philosophically about a pure earth lying in a pure heaven. He fails to see that Moses, who is far earlier than the Greek alphabet,<sup>117</sup> taught that God promised a pure earth, which was 'good and large, flowing with milk and honey',<sup>118</sup> to those who lived in accordance with His law. And the good land was not, as some think, the earthly land of Judaea, which indeed lies in the earth which was cursed from the beginning by the works of Adam's transgression."<sup>119</sup>

In any case, if there seems to be any similarity, it is due to the fact that Plato has taken his ideas from the ancient people of Jews.<sup>120</sup> Even so, however, there are only certain notions that have been preserved by him whereas he has distorted other facets of the Jewish perceptions.<sup>121</sup>

At any rate Plato was not "the first to state the truth of a place above the heavens". Long ago David had expressed this notion through his psalms.<sup>122</sup> Hence Origen is quite categorical on this point:

"I do not doubt that Plato learnt the words of the *Phaedrus* from some Hebrews and that, as some writers have said,<sup>123</sup> it was after the studying of the prophets that he wrote the passage where he says 'No earthly poet either has sung or will sing of the region above the heavens as it deserves', and the following passage in which this also occurs: 'Ultimate being, colourless, formless, and impalpable, visible only to the mind that is guide of the soul, round which is the species of true knowledge, lives in this place'."<sup>124</sup>

Origen however does not fail to portray the difference of

Christian faith of eternal life, as "end", from that of the pagans. He argues mainly that this holy land can be reached only through Jesus Christ and very clearly enunciates his belief on the question:

"Do not suppose that it is not consistent with Christian doctrine when in my reply to Celsus I accepted the opinions of those philosophers who have affirmed the immortality or the survival of the soul. We have some ideas in common with them. But at a more suitable time we will show that *the blessed future life* (ἡ μέλλουσα μακαρία ζωή) will be for those alone who have accepted the religion of Jesus, and who reverence the Creator of the universe with a pure and untained worship, uncontaminated by anything created.<sup>125</sup> Let anyone who likes show what sort of good things we persuade people to despise; let him consider what we think to be the blessed *end* with God in Christ, who is the logos, wisdom, and every virtue, which will be the experience of those who have lived purely and unblameably, and have recovered their undivided and unbroken love for the God of the universe, and which will be bestowed by God's gift, in contrast with the *end* as it is conceived by each philosophical sect among the Greeks or barbarians, or in the proclamation of some mystery-religion. Let him show that the *end* as it is conceived by one of these others is superior to the *end* as we understand it, and that their conception is fitting because it is true, whereas the blessedness in which we believe could not appropriately be given by God even to people who have lived a good life; let him prove that this *hope* was not declared by a divine Spirit which filled the souls of the pure *prophets*. And let anyone who likes show that the teaching which all agree to be merely human is better than that proved to be divine and proclaimed by divine inspiration. What also are the good things which we teach people to avoid on the ground that it will be better for them? For without boasting it is self-evident that nothing better could be conceived than to entrust oneself to the supreme God

and to be dedicated to a doctrine which teaches us to leave everything created and leads us to the supreme God through the animate and living logos, who is both living wisdom and son of God."<sup>126</sup>

Thus it is Origen himself who affirms that his views have something "in common" with certain Greek philosophical ones. Yet the passage above implies some more of Origen's ideas on the conception of eternal life.

What he concedes as similarity of pagan perception with his view of eternal life is one and single point: This is that eternal life has an *also spatial* character -since he regards it as a *spatio-temporal reality* by virtue of the fact that it is a place *within* the world.

Beyond that, however, Origen goes on arguing that his conception of the *end* is far superior to any pagan one. It is quite remarkable that he does not wish to elaborate on the actual conception of this end. For this statement in *Cels* actually refers to his eschatological ideas on which he does not wish to elaborate at all. This *end*, of which he speaks here, is not the eternal life. For eternal life is *an end* yet not the *absolute end*, on which we will discuss in chapter 5. The conception of the absolute end constitutes a mystical doctrine on which Origen deliberately avoids to refer and he explicitly states that he will not go ahead discussing this "profound" and "great" mystery with Celsus.<sup>127</sup> It was always his fear that he might "fling holy things to dogs and cast pearls before swine".<sup>128</sup> That this was the case with Celsus is stated, in one way or another, at many points of that work.

Thus when Origen refers to the *end*, and stresses that his conception of it is far superior to any pagan one, he has a profound mystery in mind which we discuss in chapter 5 in trying to portray his perception of the absolute end. A major difference which he states here is that it is only through Jesus Christ that one may reach the end.<sup>129</sup> This is not just a difference in words or the figures in depicting an

existential status which would be regarded as virtually the same. Origen's reference to the name of Jesus Christ is but a hint which implies an eschatological reality radically different from any pagan conception. Although this will be discussed in chapter 5, we note here is that there is *only one* point which appears to be "in common" with Platonists and Pythagoreans. This point lies in the *also spatial* character of eternal life. There is nothing more than that "in common" with these Greek philosophical schools. On the contrary, there are substantial differences:

Eternal life is not *out* of the world but it is *within* the world and rational creatures there are in a material state. Subsequently, this is not an *incorporeal* but a *corporeal* reality, namely a *material* reality. Thus, eternal life is not only a *spatial* but also a *temporal* reality.

Furthermore, in that existential status there is no notion of "continuity" between the divine reality and the world. Even in the eternal life rational creatures are held to be "down" whereas the divine reality is portrayed as being "up".<sup>130</sup> Even then, God is radically transcendent and the *hiatus* between God and eternal life is the same by the figure of which the world is portrayed to be *out* of God. This life is "nearer" God, yet it is still radically *out* of God. This is why the "contemplation" of God cannot be a sight of God Himself, but a sight of God manifested by him according to his *οικονομία*.

Origen did not hold that "knowledge" (as Platonists did) is a *means* to attain to "virtue", but he held exactly the opposite view: Virtue, realized as Praxis, is the indispensable means for attaining to Knowledge. This is a conceptual counter-point of Platonism.

Indeed, Plato would have never been able to take such a view, for the simple reason that he did not have any "knowledge" as a datum, namely a knowledge *given* or revealed to him. Origen was able to take

this anti-Platonic view because he had already knowledge available, due to the Incarnation of Christ and the scriptures. To him "knowledge" had been *revealed* and was already available. He needed not to try to establish it out of himself. The "testimonies" which through which God reveals himself were available to all Christians. Subsequently, the road to "virtue" had already been enlightened.

This is a major point on which Origen contrasts Platonism, not just as a matter of different view on a particular question but indeed as a completely different existential attitude profoundly affecting every aspect of human existence and behaviour.

This contrast is not accidental at all. Origen was perfectly aware of the Greek conception of "virtue" as "knowledge" and it is himself who articulates the exact Greek definition of virtue.<sup>131</sup> Yet he himself takes a completely different view. Knowledge is given through the scriptures, at least as a "beginning". This means that there is only one way to find the secret truths hidden behind the letter of the scripture. This *means* is the *practical* exercise of a virtuous life according to the divine commandments. "It is through Praxis that we find God" (διὰ πρακτικῆς εὐρίσκομεν τόν Θεόν), he avers.<sup>132</sup> God can be "approached" through "action" (κατ' ἐνέργειαν).<sup>133</sup> This is a fundamental view extended in abundance of places throughout his works. "The attaining to contemplation is praxis" (πράξις γάρ θεωρίας ἀνάβασις).<sup>134</sup> This attitude is radically different both to Platonic dialectics and to Plotinian or Gnostic sinking into mysticism with the hope that the full truth can be seen *hic et nunc*.

Thus, through the practical virtue one is led to Christ and it is through this way that Christ also leads to virtue.<sup>135</sup> Origen's fundamental existential attitude stems from the saying in the scripture: "Wisdom will not enter into a soul that practises evil neither will it dwell in a body involved in sin" (Εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν οὐκ

εισελεύσεται σοφία ουδέ κατοικήσει ἐν σώματι κατάχρεω αμαρτίας).<sup>136</sup>

This existential attitude profoundly imbues Origen's thought. The relation of Knowledge to Praxis is not just a matter of morality. It is an issue of fundamental ontological significance. To Platonic thought, "knowledge" is rather a matter of intellectual research and exercise, quite independent from praxis. Origen's conviction is the there is an profound ontological relation between Knowledge and Praxis. In this relation, the condition of the *body* is as much important as the condition of the *soul*.

Referring to man's perspective to attain to eternal life Origen is particularly consistent in emphasizing two things.

First, eternal life is a *future* perspective.

Secondly, in this process both *soul* and *body* have a crucial role to play.<sup>137</sup>

This view is subsequent to his conception of a rational being as an inseparable entity, in which the dualism "body-soul" is but a conceptual abstraction. Thus it was not Origen who was a Platonist. Platonists are rather those who think that it is possible to ascend to wisdom and knowledge of God despite their deplorable existential status, both in terms of *soul* and *body*. On this Origen's statement is quite eloquent:

"Certainly the knowledge of God is beyond the capacity of human nature (that is why there are such great errors about God among men); but by God's kindness and love to man and by miraculous divine grace the knowledge of God extends to those who by God's foreknowledge have been previously known that they would *live lives worthy* of Him after he was made known to them."<sup>138</sup>

In view of this, it is quite significant to contrast Origen's conception of "knowledge". Indeed, this notion does not allude to the usual intellectual status of "being aware of" certain things. *Knowledge*

of the eternal life (also before the actual status of eternal life, in as much as the "atmosphere" of that reality can be personally experienced in the human rank of life) is not an intellectual but an entire *existential* status. This knowledge is attained through virtue, and above all through Christian "love".<sup>139</sup> In view of that, "the knowledge of God is divided into two, namely action and contemplation. ... And in this affirmation there is an order ... because action is *before* contemplation" (πρό τῆς θεωρίας ἢ πράξις).<sup>140</sup> According to this view, Origen refers to the "theoremata" of the wisdom of God and affirms:

"Some apperceptions have as an end (τέλος) contemplation and some of them have praxis as their end" (τινῶν μὲν θεωρημάτων τό τέλος ἡ θεωρία ἐστίν, τινῶν δέ θεωρημάτων ἡ πράξις).<sup>141</sup>

Origen was quite conscious in contrasting his own thought from the aristocratic Platonic opinion that only the philosophers are finally worthy of "knowing" and being "delivered" from this life. This is exactly what he rejects:

"I believe that because God saw the arrogance or the disdainful attitude towards others of people who pride themselves on having known God and learnt the divine truths through philosophy ... He chose the foolish things of the world, the simplest of the Christians, who live lives more moderate and pure than many philosophers, that He might put to shame the wise.<sup>142</sup>

It is on these grounds that he considers the kind of wisdom in the gospel. He avers that "the authors of the gospels ... have nothing in them that is spurious, cheating, invented, and wicked". To him the fact that they "had not learnt the technique taught by the pernicious sophistry of the Greeks"<sup>143</sup> is a praise and opines that "it was for this reason that Jesus chose to employ such men teach his doctrine, that there might be no possible suspicion of plausible sophisms".<sup>144</sup> They were "considered worthy to be endowed with divine power, which

accomplished far more than seems to be achieved by involved verbosity and stylish constructions, and by a logical argument divided into distinct sections and worked out with Greek technical skill".<sup>145</sup>

As he states in an earlier work, "it is not the composition of the teaching and the pronunciation of the words and the skilled elegance of language which lead to someone's persuasion, but the bestowal of divine power" upon what is said.<sup>146</sup>

This is the background, against which Origen affirms that "the eternal life" is different from the "common" one and it occurs as a "result of faith and virtue".<sup>147</sup>

Hence, here is what radically contrasts Origen's mode of thought and conception of reality from the Platonic one: The way towards perfection is not thought to be made through *dialectics*, but through proper *action*. Thus the priority of Praxis over Knowledge is not just a question of morality, but it has a crucial eschatological significance.

It is beyond our scope to elaborate further on this topic. We have made these points<sup>148</sup> just to indicate that when Origen speaks of "contemplation" in the eternal life, it is not a Platonic notion that he suggests. His view is far from such a conception. The existential status of a rational creature in eternal life is something much more than mere intellectual knowledge. It is a quality of existence in which "knowledge" indicates the result of a certain course of moral action and it there co-exists with love to God and to each other. Thus, in that status, the condition of existence actually includes both knowledge and love, in a quality of existence which is portrayed as "friendship to God".<sup>149</sup> This is the actual existential status which Origen alludes to when he affirms that "Christians have learned that eternal life is *to know* 'the only real God' of all and 'Jesus Christ' who was sent by Him.<sup>150</sup>



In view of that, R. Norris<sup>151</sup> is entirely wrong when he asserts that man's final blessedness lies in the fulfilment of his vocation to "know". The final status is not just knowledge but it is love to God and to each other.

The purpose of the incarnation of Christ was to make rational creatures "friends to God".<sup>152</sup> Eternal life is defined through the notion of "friendship", which portrays the relation of rational creatures to God and to each other. For "those who are friends of God, are also friends and to each other."<sup>153</sup>

These are only some points which contrast Origen's conception of eternal life to the pagan perception and which he himself refers to. Yet they are not the only points, as we shall further argue in chapter 5. We only note that this "contemplation" from eternal life is an "end"<sup>154</sup> which has very little to do with the Platonic perception of it. For it is both, the presuppositions of the walking towards this end and the existential status of a creature in eternal life, that contrast this conception of *end* from Platonism.

In going ahead with the discussion of this conception of "sight" from eternal life's point of view, we should bear in mind the fundamental differences of Origen's conception of this contemplation from the Greek ideal, which was just the attaining to an ideal of intellectual knowledge. Our next step will be to enquire into Origen's perception of the "sight" from eternal life. For it is after this discussion that certain significant conclusions about the conception of eternal life itself will be reached.

## **§2. Eternal life and the notion of Infinite.**

"Contemplation" from eternal life is a state from a point of view which is regarded as "high mountain ridge" (ακρόρειαν).<sup>155</sup> Since it is the Wisdom of God that is "seen" from there, it would be plausible

to assume that this view is a "limitless" one. For it is a view of the divine reality, a view of God who is regarded as "infinite", as we have seen in chapter 2.

In order to see the real meaning which Origen attributes to the term "aeon" in this case, a significant passage in *expFrōv* should be thoroughly studied. This reads as follows:

"And he who hates doing his own soul harm, will live the long time of the boundless aeon" (ὁ δὲ μισῶν ἀδικῆσαι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, τὸν μακρὸν τοῦ ἀνεπάντου αἰῶνος χρόνον βιώσεται).<sup>156</sup>

In this passage there are two predications which indicate two different conceptions. These are "the long time" (τὸν μακρὸν ... χρόνον) and the "boundless aeon". What he makes clear is that the time of eternal life is "long", which certainly implies that this time is not "infinite" or "endless". The Genitive "of the boundless aeon" (τοῦ ἀνεπάντου αἰῶνος) indicates the "state" in which the term "long time" exists and pertains to: This state is the "boundless aeon". Thus it is clear that the term "boundless aeon" has a spatial meaning and it indicates the "place" from which "view" is "boundless". "Boundless aeon" is the status, the particular "world", namely the supreme rank of life. Origen applies the category "aeon" to that "world" because this promised land has in the Scriptures been named as "aeterna (αἰωνία; eternal) life".<sup>157</sup>

That the term "aeon" has the meaning of "world" and particularly alludes to ranks of life that comprise Origen's world is clearly stated in *homJer*, where he speaks of those who are "stronger" than Jeremiah "here in this aeon",<sup>158</sup> which means "in this world",<sup>159</sup> and this, "because the kingdom of God is not from this aeon"<sup>160</sup> but from the higher spaces".<sup>161</sup> In the same sense he uses expressions such as "before any *time and aeon*" (πρὸ γὰρ παντός χρόνου καὶ αἰῶνος)<sup>162</sup> where it is obvious that "aeon" mainly means "world" as the temporal notion is

clearly expressed by the very term "time".

In the aforestated passage of the *expProv* it is impossible for the term "boundless aeon" to be granted any temporal meaning. For in that case the whole passage would loose its meaning altogether or it would acquire a self-contradictory meaning. The "long time" stated there is the time *of* the "boundless aeon". This "aeon" is not "time" in itself, because time can in no case be "boundless" (ἀνέπαυτος). Origen is clear in enunciating his view that the term "boundless" (ἀνέπαυτος) can be applied to no creature: "The contemplation of all creatures (γεγονότων) is finite; it is only the knowledge of Holy Trinity that is boundless (ἀνέπαυτος)".<sup>163</sup> Thus, even from the point of view of eternal life, the contemplation of God by creatures is not complete exactly because "there is no end (τέρας) of his greatness".<sup>164</sup> This predication of ἀνέπαυτος (boundless) can, according to Origen, be applied to God only.

Therefore it makes sense to speak of "long time" but it is absolutely alien to Origen's conception of time to speak of "boundless time", because time is not infinite. Indeed, he does not speak of infinite time, but of "boundless aeon" by this term alluding to another perception, which we shall discuss shortly below. The important fact which we should bear in mind constantly during this discussion is that, in speaking of eternal life, Origen on the one hand *does* use the term ἀνέπαυτος (boundless) and on the other, this term cannot be applied to time, as the notion of boundless time is totally excluded.

Thus eternal life is in itself an "end" (τέρας), which nevertheless is an "end" in a spatial (as the highest rank of life) and in a moral (as the accomplishment of the goal of self-perfection) sense. This conception of eternal life as an "end" (τέρας) can be traced throughout Origen's thought as we have seen.<sup>165</sup>

The way in which Origen uses the term *τέρας* in *commMatt*<sup>166</sup>

leads to a comparison of his conception of the term *αἰών* and the term *αἰών* which means either "shore", "beach" (that is, the *νέσπον* according to Origen's own exegesis of Matt.14,22) or "bank" (of a river). Both those meanings conform to Origen's conception of eternal life, namely as an "edge" being an ultimate spatial "end" of the world, from which a "view" of the infinite Wisdom is possible and yet divided from this divine reality by a radical "hiatus", being in, as it were, "bank" of a river from where view of the opposite side is possible yet the river itself is the "chasm" between that point of view and the reality which is "seen" from there.

In fact, Origen's world-picture with respect to the divine reality is quite similar to such a perception and can be traced in a careful study of his expressions.

In *comm.John* he speaks about the allegorical meaning of "Jerusalem" and regards the term as also alluding to the divine reality. Here Origen speaks of the human possibility of comprehending certain divine truths through an "insight" of soul into this "city" of God. In is quite remarkable that this "act" of insight of the soul is portrayed through the term *διάρρη* which exactly means "passage by sea" or "crossing of a channel" and metaphorically "elevation" (of style, soul).<sup>167</sup> That is, through a single term Origen provides a portrayal of his fundamental conception of the relation of God to the world.

Accordingly, there is another point where he explicitly regards eternal life as a "shore". In using this figure he grounds it on the Scripture, namely Matt.13,47-50. He comment on that regarding the whole world as a "sea" and Christ and his angels standing in the "shore" and judging everyone according to his deeds during a consummation and "elevating" them to the "regime" which they deserve or "throwing" them "out".<sup>168</sup>

Thus when Origen comments on Ps.145,10 ("The Lord will reign

in the aeon") he says that "as the Holy Spirit announces to the church" Christ has reigned both before the aeons in an incorporeal form and in the aeons (αἰωνίως) in a corporeal form.<sup>169</sup> It is obvious that the term αἰωνίως here cannot have the meaning of "eternally", because the corporeal presence of Christ in the world lasted only for the lifetime of Jesus.

Christ is understood to be present not only in this visible world, but also is the supreme rank of life as he stands "as it were, midway between uncreated nature and that of all created things; and brings us the benefits of the Father, while as our high priest he conveys our prayers to the supreme God".<sup>170</sup> The figure of the "ladder" of Jacob, with Christ standing at the top of it, is a quite vivid portrayal of this perception of Origen's. This perception is portrayed through the figure of Christ being in the eternal life and having on his right hand the "so called invisible creatures" and on his left hand "the visible and corporeal" ones; yet "Christ reigns on all of them".<sup>171</sup> This figure is one of those by which the presence of the Logos both in divine reality and in the world is portrayed. This view of incorporeal creatures, namely of the "reasons" of the world, is what is contemplated and this is what is stated as "eternal gospel" in the Latin rendering of the *Princ*.<sup>172</sup> This is why Origen states that "inheritance of a rational creature is the contemplation of both corporeals and incorporeals".<sup>173</sup>

To meet Christ in that supreme rank of life, is to meet and contemplate him in the most clear way. For "Christians have learnt that their eternal (αἰώνιον) life consists in knowing that only true supreme God and Jesus Christ whom he sent".<sup>174</sup>

Thus Origen states that the "inheritance of a rational nature is the knowledge of God"<sup>175</sup> adducing this comment as an exegesis to the passage "And their inheritance will be *in the aeon*".<sup>176</sup> This also is

what is conceived as "salvation".<sup>177</sup> This is the sense in which this "knowledge" is regarded as "end", since "The end (τέλος) of a rational nature is the knowledge of the Holy Trinity".<sup>178</sup>

So a rational creature which lives in the place of eternal life enjoys a view towards two, as it were, directions. First he contemplates all the "past aeons" and the occurrences which happened in them,<sup>179</sup> which are finite due to the fact that they are creatures (χρηνοτά).<sup>180</sup> Secondly, he contemplates the wisdom of God, that is he contemplates the divine being which is beyond the world.

This is the "contemplation of the aeon to come"<sup>181</sup> and this is why Origen regards it as "contemplation of corporeals and incorporeals".<sup>182</sup> The term "corporeals" applies to the "sight" directed towards the world, both in its constitution and its course in time. The term "incorporeals" pertains to the contemplation of the wisdom of God.

Considering how Origen perceives eternal life we can conclude that to him the term αἰώνιος (eternal) does not imply "duration" of time, but rather quality of life in the appropriate *place*, which is certainly *in time*. Thus we can assert that he feels the term αἰώνιος ζῶν (eternal life) and αἰών (aeon) not so much deriving from what has been asserted as the Greek etymology, as αἰεί (always) ὄν (being);<sup>183</sup> rather the spatial character of this "promised land" should, in his consciousness be connected to the term αἶα which means "land" or "earth".<sup>184</sup> It should be emphasized that the etymology of αἰών as being derived from αἰεί ὄν should be read with caution and reservation -as it is most likely that it is mistaken. The testimony is preserved in a Latin text by Varro<sup>185</sup> attributing this etymology to Chrysippus and von Arnim has incorporated in his collection of texts expressing the Stoic thought. Yet it is the only passage where such an etymology is offered and we have every reason to regard it as mistaken.

The original meaning of αἰών is "vital force" and this is why it

is stated together with "soul".<sup>186</sup> Origen quite often uses the term *αἰών* in the sense of "life". Later, with the Greek tragic poets, *αἰών* came to mean "duration of a life". So, the original meaning of *αἰών*, as "life", is actual a *spatio-temporal* one.<sup>187</sup> It is only later that it acquired a mainly *temporal* meaning. Finally, with the Greek philosophers, *αἰών* is used in the sense of "eternity" as opposed to "time".<sup>188</sup> Only after *αἰών* had acquired this temporal signification the adverb *αἰεί* comes into use in the sense of "always". Thereafter the adverb *αἰεί* or *αἰί* (always) is used and the term *αἰδιος* (eternal) comes into use, too.

A. Chroust<sup>189</sup> is wrong in asserting that Aristotle suggested an etymology of *αἰών* as derived from *αἰεί* *όν*. This interpretation is one more case of taking Aristotle's passages out of their context and grambling them. In *De Caelo*, Aristotle is clear that *αἰών* means *life* in the first place. It also may mean the divine realm -but he explicates that this meaning is *subsequent* to the divine realms' being "immortal and divine". It is because what is "immortal" exists "always" (*αἰεί*)<sup>190</sup> that the adverb *αἰεί* is related to *αἰών*. It is *αἰεί* which is derived from *αἰών* -not conversly. This is why *αἰεί* does not necessarily mean "always" but it may suggest just *the mode of divine life*. This will become perfectly clear if one ponders upon this expression in the *Physics*: "Ὡστε φανερόν ὅτι τὰ αἰεί ὄντα, ἢ αἰεί ὄντα, οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐν χρόνῳ."<sup>191</sup> We quote this pasage in the original, exactly because *αἰεί* cannot be translated as "always". For, what Aristotle says is that those which are *αἰεί*, are being *αἰεί*, exactly because they are not in time. Thus, what Aristotle originally means by *αἰεί* is a notion *subsequent* to being in the divine realm. It is *after* this meaning that *αἰεί* acquired the meaning of "always", just because (as Aristotle explains in *De Caelo*) the divine realm is "immortal" and hence it exists "always".

So, we emphasize *it is not αἰών which came from αἰεί*, but it is the adverb *αἰεί* (always) which comes from *αἰών*. We think that the

mistake of Varro is that he did not know that *αἰ* is subsequent to *αἰών* and it by no means is the root of *αἰών*, but *αἰών* is the root of *αἰ*.<sup>192</sup>

Thus *αἰώνιος* (eternal) is what pertains to that holy *αἶα* (land). Besides as it seems that this "eternal life" has a spatial character quite similar to what is expressed by the old Greek word *αἰών* (shore, beach, bank), the etymology of *αἰώνιος* from "earth" should not be regarded as unexpected.<sup>193</sup>

When therefore Origen speaks of "boundless aeon" (*ἀνέπαντος αἰών*) this should in no case be interpreted as "infinite time" because this notion is totally alien to his thought. Referring to eternal life the use of the term *αἰών* alludes to another *quality of life* and not another *quantity of time*. If there is a notion of *infinity* (and certainly there is one, due to the use of the term "boundless") this pertains only to the infinity of the divine wisdom which is contemplated.<sup>194</sup>

Thus Origen makes this contradistinction among aeons on the grounds of the quality of life; for example he speaks of the "deceit of this aeon"<sup>195</sup> and the "present aeon which is evil";<sup>196</sup> or he says that "evil will not exist in the aeon",<sup>197</sup> alluding to the eschatological perspective of abolition of evil (which will be discussed in chapter 5, §1). Accordingly, he speaks of a "heavenly and better aeon" (*ἐνουπανίου καὶ κρείττονος αἰώνος*)<sup>198</sup> in the same sense that he speaks of "another aeon" in *homJer*.<sup>199</sup>

The duration of life in the supreme rank is the same for that of all the other ones. Although there is a relativity in the perception of time in the various ranks of life, the duration of that life is limited by the "moments" which mark two consecutive consummations. Thus, when Origen speaks of "*ἀνέπαντος* (limitless) aeon" he alludes to a characteristic applying only to the supreme rank of life, namely the "infinity" of sight. For to be in the eternal life means to be in time. Consequently this means that there is not only one aeon to come, but



many of them, marked by consummations and judgements. Therefore, as the time to come comprises many aeons, there can be no notion of one "infinite aeon" - a notion which is totally alien to Origen's thought.

The term ἀνέπαντος αἰών (boundless aeon) pertains to the quality of the eternal life in the supreme rank of life.<sup>200</sup> This life will last one aeon at least. The end of this temporal period will be marked by the consummation of the entire world. During this period of time, a rational being enjoys what Origen calls as life of the "boundless sight" of the Logos.<sup>201</sup> If a rational creature will continue to enjoy the same quality of life after the consummation and judgement, then one should speak not of one "boundless aeon" but of two or more "boundless *aeons*". Thus the *duration* of time is not expressed by the term "boundless" [which pertains only to the *quality* of eternal life] but simply by the term "aeons" used in the Plural. As a matter of fact, when Origen wishes to indicate a temporally prolonged residence in the supreme rank of life, he uses the term "boundless *aeons*". Obviously, if the term "boundless aeon" implied any notion of "everlasting duration", then the expression "boundless aeon" would simply mean "infinite time"; it would certainly then be absurd to speak of "boundless *aeons*", as the time thereafter could be understood as comprising *one* infinite "aeon", namely an infinite duration of time from the ascent into eternal life onwards.

All these remarks can be corroborated by Origen's own words, as in *frLuc* where he provides his view of eternal life both in terms of space and time. It is also there that he (with his usual precision) speaks of "boundless *aeons*" in order to indicate how he perceives the residence in eternal life in terms of time. Thus, quoting Luke 12,19 ["And I will say to my soul, 'Soul you have many goods laid down for many years' "] he states:

"He was saying 'You have many goods laid down' since he himself

was laid down; [and he was saying] 'you have goods laid down for many years', being himself lead astray on the judgement of what is good; for he did not know that the real goods do not exist in the cursed earth, but in the heaven. And there exists the rest and merriment of the blessed in Christ Jesus not 'in many years' but in boundless *aeons*.<sup>202</sup>

Hence, the expression "boundless aeon" is actually a figure, according to which the adjective accompanying the noun, does not actually pertain to the noun itself but to the *existential status* of the rational creature. Thus, what is "boundless" is not the "aeon" but the existential experience (namely, the "sight") of the rational creature which contemplates from that point of view.

This kind of figure is generally called "metonymy".<sup>203</sup> Origen was aware of this way of using Greek language and was always able to trace the conceptual meaning denoted by a phrase where a "metonymy" was found. Thus when he explains the expression "All the commandments of His are faithful" he comments that "he called the commandments as faithful because they are worthy of faith; for they fulfil exactly what they promise".<sup>204</sup> In the same way he explains the expression "God is faithful", as in I Cor.1,9 as meaning "you should perpetually believe in him".<sup>205</sup>

Similarly he comments on the meaning of the terms "evil day" and "good day" stating that the term "day" "here does not denote the course of the sun but the deeds happening in this [period]".<sup>206</sup>

What all these expressions have in common is that the adjective, although applied to the noun, does not actually pertain to the noun itself; it rather pertains to the *existential status* of the subject in his relation to the noun.

So "evil" or "good" does not pertain to the day (although literally the term is applied to it) but it refers to the existential status of rational creatures which are "in the day". Also "faith" does

not pertain to God himself (although literally the term is applied to him) but, as Origen explains, "faith" pertains to the existential status of men in their relation to God. Accordingly "faith" pertains not to the "commandments" themselves, but to the disposition of men towards them. Accordingly, the term "boundless" does not actually pertain to "aeon" (although literally the term is applied to it) but it denotes the existential status of a rational creature which is regarded as enjoying a "boundless" sight from the eternal life's point of view.

Thus, from that place a rational being contemplates divine life, yet he does not actually participate in it, as he remains within the world. This existential status, namely the enjoyment of a clear and boundless sight, gives another perception of time to creatures who live there.

Commenting on the passage Ps.22,6 ("Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord in a lengthy period of time") Origen regards eternal life as a place "in the right hand of wisdom" as he states: "For [we speak of] length of time and, further, life [existing] in the right hand of wisdom, whereas days of life are the various enlightenments of the truth".<sup>207</sup>

Thus, what exists in eternal life is "length of time" and "life"; this is why, at the same point, he regards the sight of wisdom as a "table of rational foods" which Christ has "prepared" (as in Ps.22,5) for the rational creatures who ascended there. This is the "table" which Origen regards as "immortality" and according to this conception he speaks of "life" in the right hand of wisdom.<sup>208</sup>

However he further makes the distinction between "length of time" (applied to eternal life) and "days of life" pertaining to the "various enlightenments of the truth".<sup>209</sup>

We have already discussed the notion of relativity in the perception of time from creatures of various ranks of life.

Furthermore, however, there is a unique characteristic of this perception in the supreme rank of life; for, in that place, there is no perspective of a further "ascending" in space-time.<sup>210</sup> "Horizontal" movement is directed towards the future, but the "vertical" perspective, as a "goal", has been achieved. Thus "movement" in that space makes a different sense from the same notion in the rest of particular "worlds" where the spatio-temporal movement is both a "horizontal" and a "vertical" one (or, at least, "vertical" movement upwards constitutes a "hope").

In eternal life there is only the "horizontal" perspective, namely the movement towards the future. There are no higher stages to be reached and there is no "clearer" sight (from a world's point of view) to be achieved, as well. The lower a rank of life is, the "dimmer" the sight of truth is. For the hierarchy of Origen's world is directly related to clearness of sight of divine wisdom. This is why Origen regards being in eternal life as a "reaching the truth face to face"; it is no more like the sight "in this life", which is a sight "through a glass and in rite".<sup>211</sup>

**The term *αἰώνιος* as a homonym.** The discussion in chapter 2 has shown that Origen regards "aeon" in a temporal sense, namely he attributes to it just the meaning of "time". Our discussion in this chapter shows that "aeon" has also the meaning of "world"; in this particular meaning the spatial sense is a pre-eminent one. Certainly it is not only in Origen that the term "aeon" means either a period of time or "world". In the Scripture itself the term can be found with in this or that meaning here and there.

It is needless to say that in Origen's thought, the term *αἰώνιος* (eternal) is a homonym. For there are three distinct cases where the term *αἰώνιος* is applied, namely "eternal God", "eternal death" and "eternal life". Each one of these terms pertains to a different reality

which has its own existential characteristics. Thus the term αἰώνιος may pertain to either a natural or a transcendent reality, namely, to the world or to the divine being.

Beyond these distinct meanings of αἰώνιος, however, Origen uses the term αἰών in a sense which pertains only to the world. In that case the term αἰών has both a spatial and temporal meaning, namely a spatio-temporal one. Due to such a conception of "aeon", this is perceived as a *natural* reality because it is a reality pertaining to the world.

To speak, therefore, in general of Origen's "concept of eternity" is an abstraction which could be misleading. For in his thought there is no general and universal conception of "eternity". In fact, the very term "eternity" (αἰωνιότητης) is never used, as it is never used in the New Testament, either. Thus one should enquire in the problem in a more detailed way, namely to see how the terms related to αἰών are used by Origen. And then some quite significant conclusions might be reached:

The term αἰωνιότης (eternity) is not used at all.<sup>212</sup> This is why, in the title of this chapter, we use the expression "the notion of *eternal*" and have avoided to use the term "eternity" at all. Instead, Origen uses the term *Jerusalem*.<sup>213</sup> The meanings which Origen applies to this term is a point which needs a particular attention. Certainly it is a homonym and there is a number of significations attributed to it. Nevertheless we can find something in common in all the various significations of this term: "Jerusalem" is called any reality in which "friendship with God" has been established. "Jerusalem" is a reality in which God is worshipped and this reality is directed to God. Thus a *soul*, which is a "friend of God" is called "Jerusalem".<sup>214</sup> The *church* is also called "Jerusalem".<sup>215</sup> The scriptural term "upper Jerusalem" is used in order to signify the actual state of *eternal life*.<sup>216</sup> In most cases, however, this expression is used in order to denote the created divine

reality, namely what came into being out of non-being. This "upper Jerusalem"<sup>217</sup> is also called by the scriptural expression "city of God".<sup>218</sup> This is the reality from which the fall occurred<sup>219</sup> and therefore it is regarded as a "fatherland"<sup>220</sup> and "mother",<sup>221</sup> for it is in her womb that what now exists was "conceived" and came into being out of non-being.<sup>222</sup> Quite remarkably, this metaphorical expression is applied either to a soul loved by God or to the church or to the *ἡγεμονικόν* of Christ, in one and the same passage.<sup>223</sup> At that point, the comment is pertinent to the term "chamber" (*ταμείον*) (which, in the same work, appears as a synonym to "upper Jerusalem") found in the Song of Songs 1,3.

All these significations of Jerusalem, or "upper Jerusalem", stand in direct relation (if not synonymity) to the term *eternity* which is not scriptural and not used by Origen at all. Thus, when eternal life is said to be *within* men, the term applied to such a soul is "Jerusalem". The same term is attributed to the *church* when is said to be built of "living stones".<sup>224</sup> The existential status befitting *eterna, life* (as the topmost place of the world and perfection of rational creatures), is also suggested by the term "Jerusalem".<sup>225</sup> The original state before the fall, into the divine life, is again stated as "Jerusalem" and this is why Jerusalem is stated as "mother".<sup>226</sup>

For each of these existential states a lot of Christian writers used the term "eternity". Origen just used the term "Jerusalem" as a homonym. Thus a soul is a "living stone"; the earthly church is made of "living stones"; the human beings in eternal life still comprise a "church" of living stones<sup>227</sup> and the originally created reality (namely, the providential creation) is portrayed through the figure of "living stones", too.

So Origen, regarding "Jerusalem" as a homonym, attributes to it different meanings at the same time. In *se/Ez* he actually alludes to

what is in common in the different allegorical exegeses of the term:

"Jerusalem is a symbol of knowledge and of the holy church and of virtue".<sup>228</sup> Elsewhere, he states the church as a "fatherland in God" (τῆς κατὰ θεόν πατρίδος).<sup>229</sup>

Thus "Jerusalem" may mean what is called "eternal life", either in the sense of a personal experience or in the sense of the actual supreme rank of life or even in the sense of the providential creation into the divine being. This is the sense in which "Jerusalem" may allude to what others called *eternity*.

Subsequently, the term *αἰώνιος* (eternal) has either a natural or a metaphysical meaning, as it it may pertain either to the world or to God.

The term *αἰών* (aeon) has a natural meaning since it is used with respect to the world.

In the Psalm 5,12 there is the passage "They will exceedingly rejoice in aeon and you will encamp in them". In explaining the meaning of this passage Origen provides a definition of what is "aeon", which is very indicative of his conception of it:

*"Aeon is a natural system, comprising various bodies [and, containing logical differentia due to the knowledge of God]"*.<sup>230</sup>

This definition of *αἰών* radically contrasts Origen's thought with the content attributed to it by Platonists and other Greeks. Whereas the latter regarded the term as indicating the divine realm, Origen, on the contrary applies it to the world. In chapter 2, we already pointed out that Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus (although used the temporal terms of Origen) attributed to *αἰών* a purely *Platonic* sense -in stark contrast to what Origen did.

Philo uses the term *αἰών* stating that it pertains to God and it is its nature to be the eternal to-day. As we saw in chapter 1, Origen provides an exegesis of the term "today" pertaining to God and he states

that to God there is neither "morning nor evening" -an affirmation which was employed by the Cappadocians as well as later Christian writers. No one should think, however, that this exegesis of Origen constitutes any kind of influence of Philo upon him. First, because Origen *does not* use the term αἰών in such a sense at all. As we emphasized, in referring to the divine reality, he does not use any noun at all. Secondly, Philo's conception of αἰών is entirely formed under Plato's influence: He regards αἰών as the "exemplar and archetype of time" (τό χρόνου παράδειγμα καί ἀρχέτυπον).<sup>231</sup> At any rate, Philo's conception of time is the same as that of Plato's, namely time, by being an "imitation" of an "archetype", is something which constitutes an "affinity" between God and the world. The only difference is that αἰών, compared with time, is "boundless" (ἀνέπατος)<sup>232</sup> and "infinite" (ἄπειρος),<sup>233</sup> regarding divine reality as a kind of endless time. Besides, as C. Dodd has suggested, when Philo uses the term ζωή αἰώνιος (eternal life)<sup>234</sup> he means a life which, like that of God, is "eternal" in the sense of "timeless".<sup>235</sup>

By contrast, Origen regards time as the element which par excellence *contrasts* divine reality from the world. Time establishes no affinity between those two radically different realities. This is why Origen avoids using the term αἰών in order to depict the divine reality, although he certainly uses the scriptural term αἰώνιος for God. And, as opposed to Philo, Origen regards eternal life not as a timeless state, but as a spatio-temporal state, namely as a state *into* the world. C. Dodd suggests that in the Fourth Gospel there is an "affiliation" of John's thought to Hebraic antecedents which regarded "eternal life" as a life "of action, movement and enjoyment".<sup>236</sup> Certainly Dodd does not regard this life as one into the world, as Origen does. But these notions ("action, movement, enjoyment") actually constitute predominant existential characteristics of rational creatures in eternal life,



according to Origen's conception of it, as will be discussed further in this chapter.

Thus Origen provides a definition of the term *αἰών* in a way denoting its spatio-temporal meaning. In *expProv* he says that "Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians has described the heavens by the notion of height" and this expression is a symbol of "*rational natures*" which "*are classified in worlds and have a body in accordance with their existential status*;"<sup>237</sup> Thus a "soul" which "constantly makes progress prepares for itself a heaven, which is a most pure creature and dwelling place of angels where the intelligible substances are found; [in that place soul will have received] the perception of Being (τοῦ ὄντος) and will have apprehended the precise knowledge of things, that is to say the much-talked-of (πολλύμυθον) judgements of God."<sup>238</sup>

Thus Origen defines "aeon" as a "*natural* system" in a way which implies both the temporal as well as the spatial character of it. According to this definition, *αἰών* denotes both the period of time between two consummations and judgements (the "horizontal" movement) as well as the built-up of the world during this period (the "vertical" structure).

In this sense, the term "aeon" denotes exactly what today is called "space-time". The status of the world between two consummations -this is how Origen articulates the spatio-temporal conception of "aeon".

Certainly this is a rather "static" conception of "aeon" as it is regarded in a certain period of time, namely between two consecutive consummations. Nevertheless Origen regards this "system" in a "dynamic" sense too, as he considers the being of "aeons" in the flux of time. This "dynamic" is determined by God's judgement at every "end" of an aeon. In *se/Ps* he explains how God is "known as Creator and Wise and Provident and Judge"; when he comes to explain the last of these

conceptions of God he states: "Again he is a Judge because of the various bodies of rational beings and the various worlds and those containing the aeons".<sup>239</sup>

The expression "various bodies of rational beings" denotes a certain "world" (according to our discussion about the concept of "world", in chapter 1) or a certain "aeon" (according to the passage above). The term "world" is in itself perceived as a spatio-temporal reality. This is why Origen, speaking of time, does not distinguish "time" from "the world" but from "the *structure* of this world". The "world" is a reality which comprises "the structure of the world" (the *spatial* element of space-time) and "time" (the *temporal* element of space-time). This spatio-temporal reality is also named as *aeon*, as Origen's above-mentioned definition shows. Accordingly, he makes the distinction between the "*constitution* of life" (τῇ συστάσει τῆς ζωῆς)<sup>240</sup> and time, which is defined as extended alongside with the "constitution" of the life. Thus "constitution of life" alludes to the conception of space, whereas time is defined as an objective reality distinct from that. The entirety of this space-time is described as "life" -and here is the most ancient and exact (namely Homeric) sense of *αἰών* brilliantly treated by Origen.

In the above-mentioned passage of *expProv*, however, there is something more that is suggested. The expression "the various bodies of rational beings" alludes to one world (that is, a certain spatio-temporal reality regarded "statically" in a period between two consummations); but the expression "and the various worlds" denotes the "dynamic" of this spatio-temporal reality. Those "various worlds" are regarded in a "horizontal" succession, namely as "consecutive" worlds. For it is through the notion of the variation of successive worlds that God can be conceived as a Judge. This notion implies the outcome of a Judgement as a rearrangement of rational creatures in the various

ranks of life and assumption of different bodies in accordance with their merits. It is only when the world is regarded in its movement and its subsequent "transformations" and "rearrangements" in the flux of time according to God's judgement, that God may be regarded as a Judge - a notion which Origen wishes exactly to depict here.

In this context, the expression "and those [worlds] which contain the aeons" alludes to "aeons" as the particular place of eternal life in a certain world. For the whole passage is a comment on the passage of Ps.137,16 where it is said "And in your book will all be written". Origen's comment on this is that "book of God is the contemplation of corporeals and incorporeals" in which book "the reasons of Providence and judgement are written and through this [book] God is learned as creator and wise and provident and judge".<sup>241</sup>

Following from our discussion in this chapter, it is obvious that Origen alludes to eternal life. The entire comment refers to the "sight" which a rational creature enjoys from there. Thus the expression "the aeons" pertains to this rank of life regarded in its existence in the flux of time. This is why, again the term "*aeons*" is used in the Plural.

In the Commentary on Romans<sup>242</sup> there is a point where Origen is presented an opportunity to provide an account of what eternal life is. This passage is preserved only in Latin and should be studied with particular caution because it is Origen's eschatological ideas that Rufinus was most ignorant of and confused about in his Latin renderings. With regard to eternal life it is stated that, in Scripture, the term "eternity" is sometimes employed to denote what has no end and sometimes for what has no end in the present world but has in the aeon to come.<sup>243</sup> The fact, however, is this: In Origen "homonymity" of a term does not mean ambiguity, in the sense of vagueness. As we shall see in the next section, "eternal death" is treated clearly by Origen in his works in Greek: It is employed to denote endless duration, but this

is implied only for pedagogical reasons. In fact there will be an end to this "death". As regards "eternal life", instead of a full account of the conception of it, the attention of the reader is drawn to three scriptural passages:

The first is the saying of Jesus "This is life eternal, that they should know You the only true God, and Him whom You did send, even Jesus Christ".<sup>244</sup> The second is again a saying of Jesus; "I am the way and the truth and the life".<sup>245</sup> The third is an affirmation of Paul: "We shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord".<sup>246</sup>

There are three fundamental notions which constitute Origen's conception of eternal life and they are denoted at that point: The first passage denotes that eternal life entails *knowledge* of God and particularly his wisdom, namely Christ. The second passage alludes to eternal life as being Christ himself<sup>247</sup> and also being "truth" (allusion to eternal life as knowledge) and "life" (eternal life as "immortality").<sup>248</sup> It is also suggested that eternal life is the result of a walk "after" Christ, who is the "way".

It is no incident that no scriptural passage where Christ is stated as the "gate" is quoted at that point. For to human beings Christ is the "way". In this account of eternal life one can discern Origen's notion that Christ is the "way" for those to whom he is not yet the "gate", and he is the "gate" only for those to whom he is no longer the "way".

The third passage clearly denotes that attaining to eternal life is a "transposition" to a higher space and being with Christ.

One can see, therefore, that it is mainly to the quality of life and the way towards it that the reader's attention is drawn. In fact, on this point Rufinus seems confused and he feels it necessary to add, as a kind of conclusion: "As therefore to be ever with the Lord has no end,

so too we must believe that life eternal has no end".<sup>249</sup>

R. Tollinton finds this latter affirmation inconsistent<sup>250</sup> -as it in fact is: His remark is that in the Greek text of I Thess. 4,17, the word *πάντοτε* (ever) and not *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* (in the aeon) is used. What he suggests is this: How can the notion of eternal life be treated through a passage where no notion of "eternal" does not appear at all?

We could add that in the second passage (John, 17,3) there is no notion of "duration" at all -and yet this passage, too, is adduced as an account of what eternal life is.

What has eluded Tollinton is that there is no the question of "duration", but that of "quality" of life, being discussed at this point. Hence the passage John, 17,3 has no notion of duration at all, and the I Thess. 4,17 also has no notion of "eternity" at all. Yet *these* are the passages that Origen found most appropriate to quote in order to indicate his conception of eternal life. As we have argued, Origen's eschatology has totally eluded Rufinus and this is a factor because of which the rendering of *Princ* in Latin has suffered most. This lack of comprehension leads him to interpolate this "conclusion" in the passage above. R. Tollinton is right in pointing out that this "conclusion" actually constitutes a discrepancy into the whole text. But it is also obvious that Tollinton himself has not actually grasped Origen's conception of eternal life, either. For even if (hypothetically) Origen adduced a scriptural passage where the expression *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* appears, it would not entail that he implies any notion of everlasting duration. Not only because time is clearly held as finite, namely as having a beginning and an end. But also because Origen treats the very expression *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* as not implying everlasting duration. In the "On Psalms", for example, he regards the expression *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* (as in Ps.48,9) as implying only the duration of a lifetime.<sup>251</sup>

Accordingly, the expression "always" (*αἰεί*) does not imply

everlasting duration. It may mean "always -as long as time exists" or simply "each time" without any implication of duration.<sup>252</sup> In that case it alludes mainly to the principles according to which the world exists (for example, the existential causality), as well as to the relation of the world to God. Also αἰί may mean "always -during a certain period of history"<sup>253</sup> or "always -throughout a lifetime".<sup>254</sup>

So it is not the absence of the expression εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, as Tollinton remarks, which is the real question. The real point lies in the actual conception of eternal life by Origen.

Thus, the term "aeon" pertaining to *natural* reality may allude to three aspects of this reality:

First, "aeon" may allude to the "vertical" structure of a certain world ("due to the various bodies of rational beings").

Secondly, it may suggest the conception of the world's course in the flux of time ("and the various worlds") alluding to the consecutive worlds in the prolonged time. Thus "aeon" may indicate the "dynamic" of the world in time, through which *only* the perception of God as Judge can be portrayed. Regarding this entirety of space-time, which is a finite series of "aeons" Origen feels that he may well speak of "eternal law" (νόμον αἰώνιον)<sup>255</sup> alluding to the existential causality as a law established *throughout the whole time* ("horizontal" view of space-time) as well as *throughout the whole world* ("vertical" view of space-time). Both these expressions can be articulated by one, namely *throughout the aeons*. In fact, this is exactly the analysis that Origen makes at that point of *commJohn* and he plausibly relates the notion of "eternal law" to a notion of "always" (αἰί): This "eternal law" has been established by God in the entire space-time, both in *the whole length of time* and in *the whole height of the world*, namely in all ranks of life.

It is according to this spatio-temporal perception of "aeons" that Origen speaks of Christ as a "coming eternal judge" (νερί τοῦ Υἱοῦ

τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ αἰωνίου κριτοῦ ἐρχομένου).<sup>256</sup> Obviously "eternal judge" cannot mean that the "act" of judging will be an "endless" one. For judgement takes no time at all. What the meaning of αἰώνιος here is that *the entire aeon* (namely the whole length of the time of its aeon as well as all the ranks of life of the aeon) will be judged.

In this sense, αἰώνιος means "what pertains to the aeons". Indeed Origen regards the scriptural expression "eternal years" (ἔτη αἰώνια)<sup>257</sup> and certainly does not regard the expression as denoting "endless" years, since the duration of a year is a definite number of days. His exegesis is that the years are called αἰώνια just because they are *into the aeons* (καί τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐτῶν), namely because *aeons* are consisted of *years*, and "years are consisted of days".<sup>258</sup>

Regarding a similar scriptural expression, namely "eternal years" (χρόνοι αἰώνιοι),<sup>259</sup> H. Sasse is confused and asserts that by such an expression the biblical "concept of eternity is weakened".<sup>260</sup> His general view at this point is that "the concepts of time and eternity merge".<sup>261</sup> His view is that "the concepts of limited and unlimited time merge in the word αἰών."; this constitutes an "inner contradiction" due to the fact that in the expression χρόνοι αἰώνιοι there is "strictly a contradiction in terms".<sup>262</sup> In view of our discussion here, the meaning which Origen attributes to the expression "eternal years" (ἔτη αἰώνια) excludes any obscurity and any "inner contradiction" in the use of the term "eternal" at this point. The fundamental presupposition excluding any ambiguity, however, is that Origen regards the term "eternal" as a homonym. Once the homonym is "clarified" Origen's thought emerges in its clarity, too.

Thirdly, the notion of "aeon" may allude particularly to the supreme rank of life of each world, namely to the "space" of eternal life. There are two particular notions clearly implied here, namely that this place is contained *in* the world ("and the [worlds] which *contain*,

the aeons) and that the term can be placed in the Plural ("...the *aeons*") in the same sense that the term "world" is placed in the Plural, too (... *worlds*). That is, "aeons" denotes eternal life, as the supreme rank of life, in the successive worlds.

In the light of this analysis we can see what is actually denoted by Origen in the passage where he provides the above-mentioned definition of "aeon".

The passage on which he comments is the Ps.5,12 ("Εἰς αἰῶνα ἀγαλλιάσονται καὶ κατασκηνώσεις ἐν αὐτοῖς"). We find the English translation of this verse as "let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them". However this translation does not contain the term "aeon" (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) which is the main point of Origen's exegesis here. So Origen's point can be followed either through the Greek passage (quoted by him) or through a literal English translation of it, which reads thus: "They will exceedingly rejoice in aeon and you will encamp in them". The comment which he makes on this passage provides his conception of "aeon" both, as the entire reality of space-time in the period between two consummations and the eternal life as the supreme rank of life of the world. The entire text of his comment reads thus:

"Aeon is a natural system, comprising various bodies [and] containing logical differentia due to the knowledge of God. He [sc. David] says that they will exceedingly rejoice in aeon (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) because [there will be] an αἰώνιος encamping in them."<sup>263</sup>

The point which Origen makes is to relate the scriptural expression *εἰς αἰῶνα* (in aeon) with *αἰώνιος* (eternal). The two terms are obviously closely related anyway, since the latter is derived from the former. Once more Origen scrutinizes the Greek language of scripture.

It is clear that the term αἰώνιος (eternal) above pertains to God himself, as it is clearly denoted both in the psalm and in Origen's



comment on it.

What is of particular significance is the expression of Origen's "in aeon". To those who would translate the term "in aeon" (εἰς αἰῶνα) as "for ever" (as it is usually translated) Origen offers an explanation of how he understands "aeon" at this point, so that there can be no room for regarding the term "aeon" as denoting some "endless duration". Thus the expression "in aeon" itself does not indicate *when* but *where* the rejoicing will take place. The *temporal* implication is denoted not by "in aeon", but by the Future tense "they *will* exceedingly rejoice", according to Origen's fundamental conviction that "ascending" to eternal life is a "hope" for the actual realization of a historical perspective which will take place in space-time; and it is not just a "mystical" experience which could fully take place hic et nunc in a Plotinian or Gnostic sense.

Thus the expression "in aeon" denotes Origen's conception of eternal life as a particular space into the entire spatio-temporal reality of the world.<sup>264</sup>

Indeed Origen portrays eternal life as being both *there*<sup>265</sup> and *then*<sup>266</sup> Eternal life in itself is *another place* which will be attained to at the *future time*<sup>267</sup> and the "land of Israel" is firmly related to the "future day" (ἐν τῇ μελλούσῃ ἡμέρᾳ).<sup>268</sup> Thus he speaks of the "day of God" alluding to the "day of the resurrection of the saints"; to this "day" he is looking forward because this is the day on which "we will attain to the blessedness in Christ".<sup>269</sup> And regarding the passage in Matthew 19,29 ("And everyone that has foresaken houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall inherit eternal life.") he points out that when Christ speaks of "multifold" he refers to "this aeon" whereas when he speaks of "eternal life" he refers to the "aeon to come".<sup>270</sup>

Thus, Now is connected to Here and Future, as *hope*, is

connected to There.<sup>271</sup>

This is an attitude completely different from that of the Gnostics. To them "perfection" (τελειώσις), "consummation" (συντέλεια), "restoration" (ἀνοκατάστασις) are already present in the person of the Gnostic; the "perfect" (τέλειος) man is already "consummated". This is a manifestation of the general Gnostic view of time as something evil, untrue and a kind of slavery. Generally, the Gnostic conception of "salvation" is wholly exempt from temporal conditions. Subsequently, the Gnostic tendency is to negate time or, at least, to dispense with it in order to surpass it. In the Gnostic thought the role of time is reduced to a minimum and the tendency is to annul it. Knowledge of oneself implies redemption from oneself, just as knowledge of the universe implies the means of freeing oneself from the world and of dominating it.<sup>272</sup> In Platonism, this knowledge was, in the final analysis, the mathematical knowledge.<sup>273</sup>

In view of this fact, the effort of certain scholars to allege that Origen's conception of redemption is essentially identical to the Gnostic and Platonic one is but a fanciful extrapolation. Such allegations have been made by H. Jonas<sup>274</sup> and A. Nygren.<sup>275</sup> Not only have these authors not seen the spatio-temporal character of Origen's thought, also they have not even attempted to distinguish between what many scholars currently call "spatial" and "temporal" thought forms. Furthermore they have been unable to see Origen's terminology in its deeper significance. Thus the outstanding characteristic of Origen's thought has eluded them; they have not seen that, in Origen, *progress* is perceived as a real *development* in the process in space-time, as an actual spatio-temporal reality firmly related to *future time* -and not as a subjective personal experience, which at any rate is regarded as possible only to a limited extent.<sup>276</sup>

The different attitude of Origen towards time, the dramatic and

meaningful character which he attributes to it constitute the Christian conception of time so vividly portrayed by him.<sup>277</sup> To him there are two kinds of "knowledge".

First, it is the natural science; "to know the constitution of the world, the energy of its elements, the beginning and end and middle of times and the sort which is stated in the Wisdom [of Solomon].<sup>278</sup> Although he had a profound knowledge of this kind of knowledge, it was beyond the aim of his enquiries and he appears unwilling to discuss it much.<sup>279</sup>

Secondly, it is the kind of knowledge which constitutes the "nourishment of soul, without which one cannot be saved", namely "the exact teaching of *how to live*" (ὁ περί τοῦ νῦν βιωτέον ακριβής λόγος).<sup>280</sup> This is what constitutes the kind of knowledge regarded by him as most important, because it is directly related to "salvation" as a real spatio-temporal perspective which has a completely different content from that of either the Greeks or the Gnostics.

In *Princ* there is a reference to the content of this knowledge rendered through the scriptural term "wisdom of this world" (as in I Cor. 2,6-8):

"Now this wisdom contains in itself nothing which can enable it on questions of the divine nature, or of the cause of the world, or of any higher matters whatsoever, or of the principles of a good and blessed life; but is such, for instance, as deals wholly with the arts of poetry, grammar, rhetoric, geometry and music, to which we should probably add the art of medicine."<sup>281</sup> As for the mystical knowledge of the pagans, this is stated by the also scriptural expression "wisdom of the rulers of this world". This includes "the secret and hidden philosophy of the Egyptians and the astrology of the Chaldaeans and Indians, who profess a knowledge of higher things, and further the diverse opinions of the Greeks concerning the divine nature."<sup>282</sup>

Therefore, A. Harnack's allegation that Origen's "Gnosis ... is in fact the Hellenic one" is absurd.<sup>283</sup> What is more damaging in this view of A. Harnack is that it seems to have exerted a major influence upon later works on Origen's thought. In fact the misleading assertions by E. de Faye<sup>284</sup> and H. Koch<sup>285</sup> were directly influenced by Harnack's allegations.

It is widely asserted that to the Greeks the ideal was to know the cosmic process as a whole, to render *nature* wholly transparent to understanding. That a Greek is not interested in the "particular" and that there is no state of definitive rest, of accomplished task and fulfilled destiny.<sup>286</sup> By contrast, in Christian thought, Providence is a concern with each unique event and action.<sup>287</sup>

Where does Origen's thought lie in respect to these two existential attitudes? It is quite ironical that his thought has been assessed as "too a Greek" one, in spite of the fact that all the characteristics currently attributed to the Christian thought are profoundly present in Origen's works. The problem is that these characteristics are not grasped simply because the vast bulk of his works is being ignored.

It is not the knowledge of *nature* that is of interest to him. Besides, it is Origen who spoke of *τό λεπτομερές τῆς προνοίας* (the detailed care of Providence), namely the immediate care of God for the most particular, even of a sparrow, even what seems to be of no importance.<sup>288</sup> And it is above all in Origen that the concern for a task to be accomplished and a destiny to be fulfilled constitute the major preoccupation of his entire work. His thought was not "too a Greek" one. On the contrary, what contemporary scholars portray as the fundamental existential attitudes which contrast the Christian from the Greek thought are outstandingly present throughout his entire work; and these are the characteristics which profoundly imbue his thought. In

fact, the kind of "knowledge" which Origen suggests as worthy of being pursued is found neither in intellectual activity nor in the contemplation of nature. This "knowledge" is stated in the scriptures and its understanding is not a question of dialectics but it is *a result of a way of living*.

This is the dramatic break between Origen's thought and any Gnostic or Greek conception of "knowledge". For its content, the dialectics about it, as well the way for attaining to this "knowledge", are originated in (and deeply imbued by) a radically different conception of time and its intrinsic meaning.

As a matter of fact, this is why Origen articulates eternal life, as *hope*, in both spatial and temporal terms speaking of "this aeon and on the earth" in contrast to "the aeon to come and in heavens" because "the kingdom of heavens is there".<sup>289</sup> From the present life's point of view, eternal life is a real spatio-temporal perspective, perceived as another place, to be reached in future time.<sup>290</sup>

In view of this, R. Hanson's assertion,<sup>291</sup> that Origen dissolves the historical significance of the eschatological, is not correct. For, as our analysis shows here, Origen does not "demythologize" eschatology as Hanson alleges.<sup>292</sup> And certainly he does not "abandon" eschatology as alleged by M. Werner.<sup>293</sup> What Werner sees in Origen is "a process of the de-eschatologizing of Primitive Christianity in the course of its Hellenization".<sup>294</sup> In fact, however, all Werner does is to postulate a verdict without providing an account of what this "Hellenistic-Neoplatonic eschatology" of Origen<sup>295</sup> comprised. The only clear point is his distinction between "individuelle" and "kosmisch-orienterten Eschatologie." But as our ensuing discussion in chapter 5 shows, Origen's eschatology retains its "cosmic" features par excellence. For the notion of the "perfection of resurrection" applies to the "world" and not to the "individual".

Hence, the study of Origen's conception of αἰών and αἰώνιος must always take into account the context in which these "homonyms" are used. For it is only after a "clarification" of the homonyms that one may discern the real meaning of those terms.

So if we are to "clarify the homonyms",<sup>296</sup> we could say that αἰών means the whole world, as Origen himself makes it clear. Yet the same term may suggest the eternal life, as the highest "ridge" of the world, from where the clearest "sight" possible can be attained. In this sense, therefore, this is the "ridge" of the "aeon" (world) or, as Origen calls it at another point, it is the "aeon" of the "aeon". In *sermons*, 60, it is quite clearly stated that to be "eternal" is to be in the "holly mountain" of God; this place, although made by God, is *in* the world and *out* of God. We discuss this very significant passage in chapter 5, §3. For this statement not only enunciates Origen's conception of eternal life, as portrayed in this chapter, but also elucidates his eschatological ideas -an aspect of his thought widely misunderstood (if not entirely ignored) hitherto.

Indeed, he does so commenting on Ps.144,21 ("My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord and let all flesh bless his name in the aeon and in the aeon of the aeon"). The last expression is currently translated as "for ever and ever". In the Psalm, the expression "in the aeon and in the aeon of the aeon" is clearly connected with an implication of "now"; the verb "εὐλογεῖτω" (let bless) is an Present Imperative form. Origen, however, regards this expression in the following way: "Any flesh which praises the name of the Lord will be in the aeon and in the aeon of the aeon which means that it will see the saviour of God in the aeon and in the aeon of the aeon."<sup>297</sup>

It is clear that the "aeon and the aeon of the aeon" is understood to lie in the *future* ("will be", "will see") as attaining to the *place* where the promise will be fulfilled and enjoyed by rational

creatures. Thus Origen affirms *where* will be the "flesh" which now "praises the name of the Lord". And this "where" is in the "aeon" (that is, *in* the world) and particularly in the "aeon" ("edge") of the "aeon" ("world"), according to the above-mentioned definition of "aeon" which Origen has made in the same work.<sup>298</sup>

The case is not so much that Origen regards "aeon" as a synonym to "world". It is not a question of synonymity. What is fundamental is that he regards the "world" as a spatio-temporal reality. Although he has made the conceptual distinction between "time" and "structure" of the world (or "time" and "constitution" of life), the fact is that he holds a spatio-temporal conception of the world -and this exactly what is indicated by these distinctions. The notion of time implies that of space and vice versa. None of them can be regarded in itself as a reality not related to the other. In the final analysis, this is the deeper conception denoted by the expression that time is "extended along side with" the "structure" of the world. The expression in the *Princ* is quite characteristic: "This world, however, which is itself called an 'age' (Wis.13,9), is said to be the end of many ages."<sup>299</sup> Here Origen states the view of "aeon" as expressed in *se/Ps*.<sup>300</sup> Speaking of the "world" there can be no actual abstraction of "space" apart from time or "time" apart from space. Those two elements of the created reality are closely connected in Origen's mind.

It is quite interesting to see how this tight connexion of space and time appears in the articulation of Origen's views. Commenting on Ezekiel 16,26 "And you committed fornication in threefold (τρισώς)" he states that the adverb "in threefold" (τρισώς) is stated "instead of [the term] 'in many places (πολλὰ τόποις); for the three times (χρόνοι) are understood to comprise the whole aeon".<sup>301</sup> It is remarkable that the term *τρिसώς*, although fundamentally meaning "in three ways", is explained as implying the "three times" (χρόνοι), namely past, present

and future. Besides, however, it is stated that the same verb is being used instead of saying "in many places".

Hence, in Origen's mind to act "in many places" is a substitute expression for to act "throughout time". So he says that the expression "in threefold" is used instead of the "in many places" *because* the three times comprise the whole aeon.

What we conclude from this analysis of Origen's is that, even in this case that "aeon" is attributed a *temporal* meaning, the *spatial* meaning of it is implied, too. In like a manner, when "aeon" is used in a predominantly *spatial* sense, its *temporal* meaning is implied as well.<sup>302</sup>

Therefore it is not a question of synonymity of the terms "age" and "world". But it is the case of a unique and single conception of "aeon" in a spatio-temporal sense.<sup>303</sup> The terms "aeon", "world" and "time" are inherently connected to each other. Thus he uses expressions such as "the things of this world and of this aeon" (τά κατὰ τὸν κόσμον καὶ τὸν αἰῶνα τούτου)<sup>304</sup> (aeon mainly implying time); or, "before any time and aeon" (πρὸ ἅπασαν χρόνου καὶ αἰῶνος)<sup>305</sup> (aeon mainly implying space). In any case, when Origen articulates the *expectation* and *hope* of attaining to *eternal life* he says; "But we look forward to another aeon of life" (Ἡμεῖς δὲ εἰς ἄλλον αἰῶνα βλέπομεν ζωῆς).<sup>306</sup> In this case the spatial and temporal characteristics of aeon are inseparably interwoven, so that "aeon" means the spatio-temporal reality of *eternal life as an expected reality*.

What we can generally say in concluding this question is this: When "aeon" is regarded with respect to the "horizontal" perspectives of a rational being, then it has a *predominantly temporal* significance.<sup>307</sup> When "aeon" is regarded with respect to the "vertical" perspectives of a rational being, then it has a *predominantly spatial* significance.<sup>308</sup> In either case, however, the spatio-temporal character



of "aeon" is not altogether extinguished, even if only the spatial or only the temporal characteristic of "aeon" is mainly regarded in the articulation of a particular facet of Origen's thought.

There is a distinction which has gained a lot of currency among certain scholars. It has been asserted that "for the Hebrews who have their existence in the temporal, the content of time plays the same role as the content of space plays for the Greeks".<sup>309</sup> On this, Boman follows von Dobschütz.<sup>310</sup> This view actually stems from the writings of von Orelli,<sup>311</sup> Johannes Petersen,<sup>312</sup> H. Robinson,<sup>313</sup> and John Marsh.<sup>314</sup> J. Muilenberg<sup>315</sup> has taken the same view, which also constitutes a fundamental premise of O. Cullmann's.<sup>316</sup> Boman states that "as the Greeks gave attention to the peculiarity of things, so the Hebrews minded the peculiarity of events; ... for them time is determined by its content. Time is the notion of occurrence; it is the stream of events".<sup>317</sup>

Thus a sharp distinction has been made by drawing a line: Greek thought is determined by notions such as "space" and "nature". Hebrew thought is defined by notions such as "time" and "history".

We shall not deal with the question in itself; neither shall we discuss the meaning of the fact the Hebrew language lacks the very word "time",<sup>318</sup> nor shall we deal with the fact that it was the Greeks who developed the problematique of time; nor shall we enquire what is the meaning of the fact that the 'father of history', namely Herodotus was a Greek -and so was Thucydides. Discussions on these (at least the first two) questions have already taken place. For example, it has been sustained that the fact that the Greeks developed the problematique of *time*, whereas the Hebrews lacked any word for "time", shows that the Greeks who were preoccupied with *space*! This is a contention of E. von Dobschütz.<sup>319</sup> It is there that he conjectures that the *spatial* notions (regarded as the "Greek" element) in contrast to *temporal* ones

(regarded as the Hebraic element) is the criterion which might be used as a scale for measuring the extent of hellenization in Christian thought. At any rate we regard these "distinctions" and "scales" and "measures" as extremely over-simplistic and utterly misleading -as the adoption of them in the interpretation of Origen's work shows.

The study of the relevant works shows that such a view has not been established through independent approaches of scholars. It is not the case of each one having made for himself an assessment in terms of philosophy of history and reached the same conclusion. It is rather a view enunciated by one scholar (as far as we know it was E. von Orelli) and henceforth it was transmitted. The philological articulation of the notion, in its simplistic form, is rather elegant and tempting. Besides it is convenient. For all one has to do is to reject any notion of "space" and to adhere to notions such as "time" and "history" -and thus he is "safely" thinking as a "Christian". Our discussion in chapter 5 on the case of O. Cullmann shows that it is not enough. One may employ only the notion of "time", to reject "space" as "danger" and "contamination" -and yet to think in a way far more "Greek" than Plato himself did. Indeed this is what actually O. Cullmann did.

As regards Origen's thought, he was not haunted by obsessions of the kind -presumably because he had a very good command of the Greek thought. For the better one knows something the less he is afraid of it. Thus he has been able to make radical transformations of the Greek thought in the conception of time. Hence both "space" and "time" had to play a role in the development of his thought -and so they did, as our ensuing discussion will further show.

What is fundamental in Origen's thought is that he did not unify the various uses of the terms *αἰών* or *αἰώνιος* under the non-biblical term of "eternity" (αιωνιότης).<sup>320</sup> H. Sasse's confusion about the meaning of (what he postulates as) "eternity" is that he tries to interpret a

non-biblical term (which is a misleading abstraction) through biblical passages. This *unification* constitutes a fundamental mistake. Origen did exactly the opposite. Not only does not he use the term "eternity" at all; but also (as a thorough study of his work shows) he *discerns* the various meaning of αἰών and αἰώνιος which are actually treated as homonyms. The unification which is portrayed by the term "eternity" can lead but to impasses and confusion -and Sasse's case is but an example of a widespread phenomenon regarding this point. Origen not only avoided this and was always scrupulous in the use of the term αἰών and αἰώνιος; but he also made further distinction in the meaning of the term αἰών and he had grasped the essentially *spatio-temporal* character of it, in the case that the term αἰώνιος does not pertain to the divine reality.

This spatio-temporal conception of Origen actually constitutes an invaluable inheritance for Christian thinkers -but it has been entirely neglected. Christian scholars have been preoccupied with their obsession to abolish any spatial implication in the conception of the world and its course in time. H. Puech regards it as a "contamination"<sup>321</sup> and O. Cullmann as a "danger" from Greek thought. What is contradictory, however, is this: H. Puech says that the "vertical interpretation" of the course of the world (which he deems to be the Greek attitude) with Christianity "gives way ... to a horizontal interpretation of the segments of time through one another".<sup>322</sup> But, at the same time, he speaks of a "plan of God" adding that "the total history of the human race" is "willed and governed by God".<sup>323</sup> We shall not pursue any questions concerning creaturely freedom out of tricky affirmations like this. We only ask this: Is not the perception of a "plan of God" in itself a "vertical" conception of the meaning of history? We think that it is. Origen did hold such a vertical conception, too.<sup>324</sup> But it was also Origen who established what Puech calls "horizontal"

interpretation of history. When Puech says that in Christian view of time "the image anticipates the model"<sup>325</sup> all he does is to repeat what Origen established as a Christian meaning of history: "Those *former* bear in themselves an *image* of those *latter*" (Τῶν γάρ δευτέρων εἰκόνα φέρει τὰ πρῶτα),<sup>326</sup> he affirmed long ago. That Puech did not know this view of Origen could not matter at all, if he did not adduce the case of Origen as an example of Greek rather than Christian conception of time.<sup>327</sup> Furthermore, in order to contrast these two conceptions of time, he appeals to Augustine -who, however, was profoundly influenced by Origen's conception of time, as we have proven in chapter 2.

In the light of Origen's conception of time it would be quite hard to find what Augustine's real and original contribution to the formation of a Christian view of time was. On the contrary, it can be said that in Christian thinkers after Origen the profound perception of the world as a spatio-temporal reality, in which time is not only directed towards a goal and end, but it has a profoundly dramatical character, fades. And this disintegration of an original and brilliant perception is mainly due to the eviction of the *spatial* element of this whole conception. Inevitably, this led to a crippled conception of the relation of time to space, a crippled conception of reality itself, which is too obvious in the writings of authors such as H. Puech and O. Cullmann and many others. The established findings of modern science prove how the abandoning of Origen's brilliant conception of space-time has led to simplistic and rough affirmations about *time proper* (and the above mentioned authors are just a few amongst many). For no one would assert that a theological treatment of time could be at any rate sound without a profound knowledge of what time proper is and the problematique surrounding this question. This is what the Greek philosophers knew profoundly. This is what modern scholars who offer theological treatments of time do not want to know. And this is what

constituted Origen's background in establishing his view of time. Perhaps this is the reason why Origen is justified by modern science. The account of time which he established will be, sooner or later, overwhelmingly accepted as the original and most brilliant articulation of the Christian conception of time.

### **§3. Eternal life and freedom.**

Origen's view of eternal life is in accordance with his notion of existential causality. This particular world is the rank of life attained to by a rational creature who reaches this state of blessedness "through a kind of progress",<sup>328</sup> for "souls, advancing and ascending little by little in due measure and order, first attain to that other earth and the instruction that is in it for those better percepts to which nothing can ever be added".<sup>329</sup>

Thus eternal life is reached through a kind of progress and evolution in time. Origen very vividly portrays this notion by employing the figure in Matt.13,45-46, where the "kingdom of heavens" is resembled with a "goodly pearl". He takes the view that this simile of eternal life to a pearl is not without cause; it was employed because of the way in which a pearl is created. This simile indicates the fact that walking towards eternal life is realized through "many changes" and "alterations" until a rational being is "made perfect". All this procedure is understood to take place in time. "It is said that the formation of the pearls in Indies takes place gradually through long time as the animal takes many changes and alterations until it becomes perfect".<sup>330</sup>

Eternal life, therefore, is an existential status which is understood to be the result of a "walking", namely gradual evolution towards moral perfection. In *exhMar* the direction of this course (though not eternal life itself) is portrayed thus:

"Let us not be surprised that the wonderful blessedness of the

martyrs who enjoy deep peace and calm and brightness has to be begun in apparently dark, and, so to speak, wintry weather. It is by journeying in this life on the straight and narrow way<sup>331</sup> in winter that each one of the blessed will have to show what ability he has gained for following the right road; so that after this life there may be fulfilled the word in the Song of Songs said to the bride who has come through the winter: 'My beloved', she says, 'answers and says to me, Arise, come my friend, my lovely, my dove. Behold, the winter is past, the rain has dispersed and gone away.'<sup>332</sup> You also should remember that you cannot hear that 'the winter is past' unless you have battled bravely and manfully with the present winter. After the winter is past and rain has gone away and dispersed the flowers will appear. 'Planted in the house of the Lord they shall flower in the halls of our God.'<sup>333</sup>

This notion of "walking" towards the eternal life is in tune with Origen's fundamental conception of time as extension of a teleological character, as well as his view that eternal life is a temporal status to be reached within the framework of existential causality. This notion is clearly expounded in *Cels*:

"If anyone should want to have suggestions of the deeper truths about the way in which the soul enters into the contemplation of the divine things, derived not from the most insignificant sect which he has mentioned (sc. the Orphites) but from the books, some of which are Jewish and are read in their synagogues, and in which Christians also believe, and some of which are only Christian, let him read the visions seen by the prophet Ezekiel at the end of his prophecy where different gates are depicted, conveying in veiled form certain doctrines about the various ways in which the more divine souls enter in to the higher life.<sup>334</sup> Let him also read from the Apocalypse of John about the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and about its foundations and gates. (Rev.21). And if he is also able to learn by means of symbols the way

indicated for those who will journey to the divine realm, let him read the book of Moses entitled Numbers; and let him ask anyone competent to initiate him into the statements about the encampments of the children of Israel, of what nature were those fixed on the eastern side which are mentioned first, and of what sort were those on the south-west or south, and what were those which faced the sea, and what were those on the north side which are mentioned last.<sup>335</sup> For he will perceive truths of considerable profundity in the passages."<sup>336</sup>

In *commMatt*, Origen refers to him who by the proper moral action will become "perfect" and "once acted in this way, he will have a treasure in heavens, becoming a heavenly [creature] himself;".<sup>337</sup>

Thus eternal life is directly related to free moral action. Proper action is regarded as a "beginning"<sup>338</sup> of the "walking" which leads to eternal life. This relation of freedom to eternal life is underlined by the affirmation that "he who *willed* to become perfect will have a heavenly treasure in the place of His".<sup>339</sup>

This *will* is a fundamental element of the "walking" towards this goal. This is why he calls eternal life as a "chosen life" (αἰρετή ζωή).<sup>340</sup> In *Dial* there is a more detailed view of this notion and among others it is stated: "Let us then take the eternal life up; let us take it up by our free will. God does not grant us it, but he sets it before us;" (Οὐ δίδωσιν αὐτήν ἡμῖν ὁ θεός ἀλλὰ παρατίθησιν).<sup>341</sup>

Beside this, however, in Origen's thought there is a notion that man is not intrinsically capable of achieving such a goal without help. As he points up, "human will is not sufficient in order to attain to the end" (οὐκ ἀρκεῖ τό ἀνθρώπινον θέλειν πρὸς τό τυχεῖν τοῦ τέλους).<sup>342</sup> So "those who think that they have the natural capacity to attain the end in Christ, are deluding themselves" (εαυτούς γάρ ἀπατῶσιν οἱ νομίζοντες ἀρκεῖν πρὸς τό τυχεῖν τοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ τέλους).<sup>343</sup>

This is an attitude opposite not only to Platonism, but also to

Gnosticism. Whereas to the Gnostics salvation is obtained *by* knowledge,<sup>344</sup> to Origen "knowledge" is but a *by-product* of salvation, which is obtained through praxis. At any rate, man is not self-sufficient in attaining knowledge, which can be achieved only by God's grace since "He is found by those who, after doing what they can, admit that they need Him".<sup>345</sup>

A comparison to Plato's thought would be quite revealing at this point. In the *State*, Plato stresses that "it is impossible for anyone except the philosopher to have enjoyed the contemplation of the real being and seen how delightful it is" (τῆς δὲ τοῦ ὄντος θεας, οἷαν ηδονὴν ἔχει, αδύνατον ἄλλῳ γεγεύσθαι ἢ τῷ φιλοσόφῳ).<sup>346</sup> Many scholars would regard the use of the word *θεά* (used by Plato here) as a "Platonism" of Origen. What has eluded all of them, however, are the substantial differences in Origen's thought. There is nothing of the "aristocratic" character of Platonism in Origen. Salvation is possible *for anyone* once he has *acted* according to the word of Jesus. The causative relation between Praxis and Knowledge are completely inverted in Origen. No philosopher will be able to "see" Christ unless he has *acted* properly. And if a simple minded man has followed *in actuality* the teaching of the word, he will be saved. Here Origen stands in sharp contrast to Platonic dialectics and its conception of the possibilities and perspectives of a human being.

Subsequently Origen considers that attaining to eternal life becomes possible by the help of the son of God. Through this notion Origen composes two fundamental views of his theology: First, that eternal life is a "chosen life". Secondly, that knowledge of God can be attained not only through free moral action but also through the help (the "grace") of God. This is what is suggested by affirmations like "... he who can ascend to the mountain edge through self-improvement, he ascends walking behind the Lord".<sup>347</sup>



In *commJohn* Origen elaborates on this view stating that Christ is "all the flights of steps for us" (πάντες εἰσὶν οἱ ἀναβαθμοὶ ὁ σωτήρ)<sup>348</sup> and walking alongside him we can "ascend through him" (ὡ ἐπιβαίνοντες οδεύομεν). And "as far as the conceptions of his are concerned, 'road' is different from 'gate'<sup>349</sup> as one has at first to go forth to meet the road so that afterwards he will reach the gate".<sup>350</sup>

Thus out of the conception of the presence of Christ, as Logos, in the world, Origen holds that Christ is present in eternal life as well. Nevertheless, he is there conceived of as the "gate" whereas in the rest of the world he is understood to be present as the "road".<sup>351</sup> Origen is clear, however, in stating that "Although he (sc. Christ) somewhere points out that he is both road and gate,<sup>352</sup> he is clear that to him whom he is still road he is not gate yet<sup>353</sup> and he is no more road to him that he is already a gate."<sup>354</sup> For Christ is regarded as a "gate" only to those who have already reached eternal life.

This is how Origen depicts the conception of the presence of Christ in the world and points out the difference of his presence in the eternal life from his presence in the rest of the world.

**The changelessness of eternal life.** From the affirmation that eternal life is *within* the world follows that it should be subject to the general rules established in this world, as discussed in the previous chapters, namely temporality, corporeality, existential causality, judgement etc.

Origen himself speaks of some "conditions of the blessedness" (τῶν ὁρῶν τῆς μακαριότητος) relating them to the "word" of Christ "who convinced" the faithful about the eternal life.<sup>355</sup>

The notion of the existential causality itself establishes the idea of the conditionality for the residence in the supreme rank of life -like in any other rank of life. In *Princ* this idea is explicitly stated:

"It is non the less possible for one who has become at the present

time a vessel of honour in consequence of certain former righteous deeds and yet has not acted similarly here nor in a way befitting a vessel of honour, to become in another age a vessel of dishonour; just as on the other hand it is possible for one who by reason of acts older than this life has become here a vessel of dishonour to become, if he amends his ways in the 'new creation' a 'vessel of honour sanctified and meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work'."<sup>356</sup>

Since eternal life denotes a quality of life in the world, it is consequent on Origen's fundamental principles that it is a prerequisite for the residence in a life of a certain grade and quality to act according to the quality of this rank of life. Indeed he regards eternal life as the one of the supreme quality and blessedness yet he also regards it as an active state, according to his general view of perpetual free moral action into the world.

Certainly the kind of action in the eternal life is different yet it is still *action*. How Origen perceives this activity in the eternal life is portrayed in this passage in *commJohn*:

"And which is the city of the great king, the real Jerusalem or the church which is built of living stones, where [there is] a holy priesthood<sup>357</sup> and spiritual sacrifices are being offered to God by the spiritual and those who have comprehended the spiritual law? But it should be understood that when the fulness of time comes<sup>358</sup> then the real adoration and perfect piety will be performed not in Jerusalem and one will live not in flesh but in spirit<sup>359</sup> and not in figure but the whole of him will live in truth, having been made of such a quality that he will be of the kind of worshippers which God requires them to be."<sup>360</sup>

Those who live in eternal life are portrayed as "holy stones" (οἱ ἁγιοὶ οἱ ἅγιοι) who have as "their main task to praise God ceaselessly" (Καί τό τούτων κεφάλαιον τό ἀπαύστως εὐλογεῖν τόν θεόν).<sup>361</sup> This is why Origen regards the "daily bread", which is asked of God through prayer,

as necessary not only for the present aeon but also for the aeon to come. Indeed, those who will be resurrected (namely those who will be found worthy of attaining to eternal life) will also be in need of a "bread befitting that aeon" (τόν ἄρτον τόν οικεῖον τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος) by virtue of the fact that they also are in an active state.<sup>362</sup>

The activity, therefore, in eternal life is what Origen portrays as "spiritual sacrifices" and "perfect piety" or "to bless God ceaselessly". This is the pre-eminent reason for Origen to describe the existential status in the eternal life as an "altar". The contemplation itself from the point of view of eternal life is not a passive state but an active one. This is why he states that in that state "Altar is the contemplation of corporeals and incorporeals".<sup>363</sup> So even the very status of "sight" is understood to constitute an active state of a rational being.<sup>364</sup>

Accordingly, in *exhMar* Origen states:

"Let us each remember how often we have been in danger of dying the common death<sup>365</sup> and reckon that we may have been preserved in order that, baptized in our own blood and washed from all sin, we may dwell beside the heavenly altar with our comrades in the fight".<sup>366</sup>

In this passage Origen not only reiterates his conception of eternal life as having *also* a spatial character ("τάς διατριβάς ... ποιησώμεθα") but he further alludes to the active character of it as he describes it as "the heavenly altar" ("τῷ ἐν οὐρανοῖς θυσιαστηρίῳ"). In view of this, in *se/Ps*, he states that the "life of the soul" is mainly regarded in "the aeon to come"; for it is mainly "then that it will praise God".<sup>367</sup>

Hence eternal life is regarded not as a state of immobility, but as an active one. It is exactly due to this active character that this life is regarded not as an irreversible condition but as an existential status which may change if the activity of a rational being living there is not always the appropriate one.

Origen's view is that God "judges" the world through his holy angels. In explaining Ps. 2,11 he states that "kings are said to be those saints who judge the earth" and avers that it is contingent that those who are "judges of the earth" might "rejoice exceedingly" yet "carelessly" and forget that this is a rejoice in God and so they might fall in "weakening out of careless relaxation" (χαύνωσιν) and self-conceit (οίησιν)". These characteristics constitute a cause of "fall" (εκνέσωσιν) and Origen affirms that these saints "*may fall*, once the divine visitation abandons him who had been found deserving to be reasonably exalted because of certain estimable deeds he had previously committed."<sup>368</sup>

In *deOr* he speaks of the perspectives of "soul" being orientated to the "eternal life", as he does in *Princ* where he speaks of the perspectives of a soul towards the "boundless aeon". In the passage here Origen not only corroborates that view, but also further articulates the notion of a "second" fall of the soul, after its ascending to the "topmost edge of goods" (ακρόπειαν αγαθών).

"I do believe that God dispenses every rational soul *with a view to its eternal life* and that it always maintains its free will, and of its motion either mounts ever higher and higher until it reaches *the topmost of goods*, or on the contrary descends through carelessness to this or that excess of wickedness. When a rapid and quick cure causes some to regard lightly, as easily cured, the diseases into which they have fallen, so that after being restored to health they *fall the second time* into the same condition; in such cases God will with good reason disregard their increasing wickedness to a certain point, and even overlook it when it has developed in them to such an extent as to be incurable, in order that continuance in the evil may cause them to take their fill and be glutted with the sin they desire; thus they may become conscious of their harmful condition and hate what they formerly welcomed, and so when they are healed they can possess more securely the health that comes to

their souls by being healed."<sup>369</sup>

This passage does not just refer to what happens to a man during his lifetime, although his remarks pertain to what happens during a lifetime, as well; but it mainly refers to soul "with view to its eternal life", namely what is described above pertains to the life of a rational being throughout *aeons*.<sup>370</sup>

In order that no doubt should remain as to what Origen means by this view regarding the perspective of eternal life, he elaborates on this notion in the next paragraph of the same work. He there explicitly speaks of the "exodus" (ἐξεῤῥόντες), of the soul from "this life" and his remarks pertain to the existence of a rational being "in long periods of time".<sup>371</sup> The discussion at that point refers to rational beings which "went out" of human rank of life and "remember through how much pain they have gotten rid of" living here. Yet Origen takes the view that it is possible either "never to fall in this [rank of life] again" or "after long periods of time" some rational beings, "if they are not careful", might "forget what they suffered in this life" and come to this rank of life again so that they "for a second time" find here the evil desires which again arose in them because of their oblivion of their suffering here due to the elapse of "long period of time".<sup>372</sup>

Thus the notion of fall "for a second time" from "the topmost of goods" actually refers to the existence of rational beings in the various ranks of life and particularly here, it refers to a "fall" from the eternal life.

This notion is also clearly stated in a relevant analysis in the *commJohn*, which is adduced as an exegesis to the passage of John,8,51 ("Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death").<sup>373</sup> In Origen's view the kind of "death" stated here is that which is referred in the passage "The last enemy destroyed [is] death".<sup>374</sup> This "death" is just "the enemy of his who said 'I am the

life'.<sup>375</sup> This "death is regarded to be by nature an obstacle" and "this is the death which will never be seen by anyone who keeps the word" of Christ.<sup>376</sup>

It is obvious that there is a notion of *conditionality* in this biblical passage, expressed by the word *εάν* (if). The scriptural expression "in the aeon" has a predominantly temporal meaning and denotes a "perpetuity of immortality" in the time thereafter. Although Origen does not in any way dispute the meaning of the passage, it is very indicative of his conception of time that he attempts an additional philological approach to this. Thus he states:

"I enquire if the [expression] 'In the aeon'<sup>377</sup> can be considered as also pertaining to *place*, so that the whole [expression] is thus: If one keeps my word in the aeon, he will not see death. For it is certainly plausible that one does not see death for such a length of time *as long as* he keeps the word of Jesus; but once one lost this word, he then saw death. But if one is able to enquire in the deeper reasons and understand in what sense the saying 'And thou hast brought me into the dust of death'<sup>378</sup> is said by a *human being* and in what sense Paul says 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' he will comprehend in what sense *as long as* the word was kept death was not seen by him who was keeping it; but *when* someone did *no more* keep it because he got tired of being careful and keeping the word or he lost watchfulness about keeping it, then he faced death, not because of anyone else but because of himself. And anyone should regard this doctrine as an eternal law; for once we took the word [of Christ] up, it will always (αἰ) be said to us the saying 'If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death'. And it is like, so to speak, when someone sees darkness for long he looses his eyes, in the same way once death is seen by him who did not keep the word [this death] kills and mortifies the eyes of him who saw it and makes him blind, so that he will be in need of him who opens the

eyes of the blind. And I do think that this is the reason why the blind, of which the blind in the gospel were a symbol, lost their eyes, namely because they faced death since they did not keep the word [of Christ]".<sup>379</sup>

It is most significant of Origen's spatio-temporal view of reality that he wishes to consider the expression "in the aeon" as pertaining to *place*, as well as to time. The reason for doing so is that this his notion of existential causality makes actual sense in a spatio-temporal reality, namely is a reality where not only the *temporal* but also the *spatia*, character of it is taken into account.

According to the notion of existential causality, Origen portrays his conception of eternal life as a state which can be attained and continuously enjoyed *on certain conditions* which he calls as "eternal law" (νόμον αἰώνιον). Eternal life is enjoyed *as long as* those conditions are honoured. It is exactly the consideration of the *also spatia*, character of eternal life and the existential characteristic of "contemplation" from there, that stand at the basis of Origen's analysis here. The core of his conviction that attaining to the eternal life is not an irreversible process is vividly articulated by his "*as long as* ..." notion, as in the passage above.

As a matter of fact, this is not the only place where Origen articulates this "*as long as*..." notion. This is also stated in *Cels* where he uses the same words (ὅσον) to depict the conditional character of the residence in the eternal life. Thus he states:

"For we have a great high priest who by the greatness of his power and of his mind 'has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God'<sup>380</sup> who told those that had genuinely learnt the things of God and who lived lives worthy of them that he would lead them on to things beyond this world. So he says: 'That where I go, you may be also'.<sup>381</sup> On this account we hope that after the 'troubles and strivings'<sup>382</sup> here we shall come to the topmost heavens (πρὸς ἄκροις γενέσθαι τοῖς οὐρανοῖς), and according

to the teaching of Jesus will receive 'springs of water springing up to eternal life',<sup>383</sup> and will have the capacity for rivers of visions (θεωρημάτων), and will be with the waters that are said to be 'above the heavens' which 'praise the name of the Lord'.<sup>384</sup> *As long as* we praise him (ὅσον γε αἰνούμεν αὐτόν), we shall not be carried about away from 'the circumference of the heaven',<sup>385</sup> but we shall always (αἰεί) be engaged in the contemplation of the invisible things of God, which will no longer be understood by us 'from the creation of the world by the things that are made'<sup>386</sup> but, as the genuine disciple of Jesus expressed it, when he said 'But then face to face'; and 'When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.'"<sup>387</sup>

In accord with his (as well as scriptural) view that "eternal life" is also a personal experience attained, to a certain extent, in this life, Origen applies the same conditionality to this conception of "eternal life" as well. Thus he says: "If you believe that Paul was caught up to the third heaven, and was caught up to Paradise and heard unspeakable words which man cannot utter,<sup>388</sup> you will accordingly realize that you will have the immediate knowledge of more and greater matters, than the unspeakable words revealed to Paul. For after receiving them he descended from the third heaven, whereas after you have acquired this knowledge you will not descend again, *if you take up your cross* and follow Jesus whom we have as 'a great high priest who has passed through the heavens'.<sup>389</sup> And *if you do not fall away* from those who follow him you yourselves will pass through the heavens".<sup>390</sup>

Similarly, it is quite remarkable to see how Origen comments on a certain passage in *se/Ps*, namely the passage 29,7 ("In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved"). In the Greek text there is a semicolon after the word "mine" [prosperity]; thus the meaning of the passage is "I will never (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) be moved; this is what I said in my prosperity". Origen, however, regards the structure of this phrase in a



different way; he puts the semicolon not after the word "mine", but after the word "said"; so the passage reads as follows: "And I said; In my prosperity I will never be moved ". This is the passage on which Origen comments thus:

"It is either Christ or a just man who says the 'I said'; then, after the semicolon in this word (εἶτα μετά τήν ἐνί τούτῳ στιχμῆν) [he says] 'in my prosperity I will be not be moved in the aeon' (ἐν τῇ εὐθηνίᾳ μου οὐ μή σαλευθῶ εἰς τόν αἰῶνα). It is befitting to be said that he who is in prosperity is not moved. As we have many times said, this pertains to the human nature of the saviour. And according to Symmachus, if the expression is 'in my quietude', it may indicate the calm and impassiveness of the soul made perfect; anyone who has reached this condition will no more be moved. For *if* one is in spiritual prosperity he will never be moved."<sup>391</sup>

So he regards this expression in such a way that he maintains the notion of contingency of "not being moved in the aeon".

This "*as long as...*" notion pre-eminently emphasizes Origen's view of eternal life as an *active* state.

Thus the opinion of H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti that Origen seems to regard eternal life as an immutable state<sup>392</sup> is erroneous. When Origen speaks of "rest" in the higher places of the world, he does not allude to any state of immobility whatsoever. Perpetual free moral action is a fundamental characteristic of the world as conceived by him. When he speaks of "rest" he just speaks relatively, namely he compares the quality of the life on earth (which is a life of suffering and toil for the pious -particularly those of his era) to the quality of life in the higher places of the world. All he does is a *comparison* -nothing more than that. In any case he does not regard life in higher places as inactive. Thus he states that "to those in flesh and blood there are *more* pains and precarious life *than* those who live in an aetheral body"

(πλείους γάρ οί πόνοι καί επισφαλῆς ἡ ζωὴ τῶν ἐν σαρκί καί αἵματι παρὰ τοὺς ἐν αἰθερίῳ σώματι).<sup>393</sup> Eternal life is a "life of relaxation" (εἰς ἀνεσιν)<sup>394</sup> but not a life of inactivity. So when Origen speaks of "rest" in eternal life, he does not fail to point out that it is not an absolute one, but a kind of "rest befitting blessedness" (τὴν οἰκείαν τὴ μακαριότητι ἀνάπαυσιν ἀναπαυσώμεθα).<sup>395</sup>

In the Fragment CV of the "Commentary on John", he comments on the passage 14,3 ("And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"). His remark is that this "place" has been prepared by the providence of the Father so that "those who live virtuously and according to rigid discipline may perpetually dwell in those prepared favourable circumstances".<sup>396</sup> It is obvious that here as well Origen maintains the notion of conditionality regarding the residence in the eternal life. Once ascended into that quality of life, one has to live according to a rigid discipline (κατὰ πάσαν ἀκρίβειαν), that is according to what Origen has named as "conditions of blessedness" (τῶν ὁρῶν τῆς μακαριότητος) directly relating this notion to that of eternal life.<sup>397</sup>

In view of this notion Origen states that "those who genuinely hear of Jesus, at first follow him, then, learning about his abiding are allowed to see it and once they come they see"<sup>398</sup> and stay 'in him' [John1,40], all of them 'on that day'<sup>399</sup> and perhaps some of them stay for longer."<sup>400</sup>

It is through this allegorical exegesis of the passage Matt.13,36, and particularly through the term *perhaps*, that the contingency of staying in the eternal life is again pointed out.

As a matter of fact, Origen holds that to ascend and live in the eternal life, which he also calls "immortality",<sup>401</sup> is something contingent and therefore it is a reversible condition.

In *commJohn* he regards both the sayings "Who only has

immortality<sup>402</sup> and "I live, the Lord says<sup>403</sup> as meaning that "no one of those who live beside God has the life which is altogether unchangeable and unalterable." (ουθενός τών παρά τόν Θεόν ζώντων έχοντος τήν άτρεπτον πάντη καί αναλλοίωτον ζωήν).<sup>404</sup> Further he clearly states that "*those*" (referred in the passage above) are "the living in their own world" (καί ζώντων έν χώρα ιδία τυγχανόντων),<sup>405</sup> namely those living in the eternal life. Elaborating on this subject he comments as follows:

"Together with our enquiry about the living God and life, which is Christ, and [about] those living in their own world and those living who are not justified in the sight of God,<sup>406</sup> and having cited what is denoted by the [saying] 'Who only has immortality' we shall add that no rational being has blessedness (μακαριότητα) as an inseparable attribute." (ώς αχώριστον συμβεβηκός). For if it has blessedness and the previous life as an inseparable attribute (εάν γάρ αχώριστον έχη τήν μακαριότητα καί τήν προηγουμένην ζωήν) "how can be true this which is said about God 'Who only has immortality?' ".<sup>407</sup>

In *Cels* Origen enunciates the notion of "falling" from the eternal life, which also here is called as "life" according to his analyses discussed above. He affirms his notion of the various ranks of life comprising the whole world and also reiterates his view of eternal life as the "supreme" one:

"It was necessary for God, who knows how to use even the consequences of evil for a needful end, to put those who became evil in this way in a particular place of the whole [world], and to make a school of virtue to be set up for those who wished to strive 'lawfully'<sup>408</sup> in order to obtain it. His purpose was that when, like gold in the fire, they had been tried by the evil<sup>409</sup> and done everything possible that they might let nothing impure enter their rational nature, they might appear worthy of progressing to the divine realm and be drawn up by the Logos to the supreme blessedness of all and, if I may so express it, to the

mountain- summit of goodness (ἀκρόρειαν τῶν ἀγαθῶν).<sup>410</sup>

Yet it is in the same paragraph that Origen emphasizes the notion of the irreversibility of this "ascending" to the "supreme" rank of life:

"It is not possible for that which is good contingently (κατά συμβεβηκόσ) and consequentially (ἐξ επιγενήματος) to be good in the same sense as that which is good in its own nature (τῷ οὐσιωδῶς ἀγαθῷ); goodness in the former sense will never go away from him<sup>411</sup> who, so to speak, receives the living bread for his preservation. And if it goes away from someone, it is himself who caused it because he *neglectec* (παρυσμήσαντος) to partake of the living bread and the true drink."<sup>412</sup>

What Origen depicts here in the final analysis is the radical difference between God and the world: God is unchangeable whereas rational beings are changeable and convertible due to the very fact that they have been created. This notion is in accordance to the principle as articulated in *Cels*, namely that "the universe is cared for by God in accordance with the conditions of the free will of each rational being, and that as far as possible it is always being led on to be better" since "the nature of our free will is to admit various possibilities (for it cannot achieve the entirely unchangeable nature of God)".<sup>413</sup>

This is the sense in which Origen affirms that the category of "goodness" (ἀγαθόν) is fundamentally attributed to God only and it is only "unwarrantedly" attributed to anyone or anything else.<sup>414</sup>

Thus it is pointed out that "angels are of a race which is superior to human one" yet "many among the angels become lower than human beings" whereas "many among men, who are lower than angels in nature, become superior to certain angels who were superior but became lower due to certain causes".<sup>415</sup>

It is again through the "*as long as*..." notion that Origen expresses this re-arrangement out of the fall of angels:

"*As long as* they were keeping 'their first estate' and did not

leave 'their own habitation'<sup>416</sup> they were far more different than human beings and superior to them" whereas human beings "become superior to angels" and ascend to "the dwelling place of angels" "once they do everything that may raise them to the kingdom of heavens".<sup>417</sup> This, since "a more rational existential status may be changed to a less rational, suffering this because of much laziness and negligence; accordingly a less rational character may revert to being rational, in spite of its former negligence of the word of God".<sup>418</sup>

This general principle applies to eternal life too, since it is an existential status *within* the world. These views can also be traced in *Princ* and thus the pertinent passages there can be confirmed as expressing Origen's thought authentically. So, speaking of the world he states:

"These are they who dwell 'in heaven and on the earth and under the earth'<sup>419</sup> the three terms indicating the entire universe, that is all those beings who started from one beginning but were drawn in various directions by their own individual impulses and were distributed throughout the different ranks of existence in accordance with their merit; for in them goodness does not reside essentially, as it does in God and his Christ and in the Holy Spirit. For only in this Trinity, which is the source of all things, does goodness reside *essentially*. Others possess it as an *accident*, liable to be *lost*".<sup>420</sup>

Again, he affirms that in rational creatures "the good" exists "within them as an accident and not by nature, that is, not essentially".<sup>421</sup> And "For every nature which is alterable and changeable, even though it may be glorified in works of righteousness or wisdom, cannot be said to possess a glory that is sincere and bright, by reason of the fact that its righteousness and wisdom are accidents, and whatever is *accidental* may also be *separated and lost*".<sup>422</sup> With respect to the "holy powers" it is pointed out that "goodness is not in them as part of

their essence" for "essential goodness is found ... solely in Christ and the Holy Spirit, and of course in the Father also."<sup>423</sup>

Speaking of the creatures which are "in the hand of God", Origen states that "if they do not fall from the hand of God, in this way taking themselves away from it, they will not be plucked out; for no one plucks out of the hand of the Father."<sup>424</sup>

The same notion is expressed in *hom. Jer.* Quoting John 10,29 ("No one is able to pluck out of my Father's hands") he points out that it has been written that "no one *plucks* of" but it has not been written "no one *falls* away of his hands" (οὐ μὴν γέγραπται ὅτι ὡς οὐδεὶς ἀρπάζει, οὕτως οὐδεὶς διαπίνει ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ). "For the self-determination is free (τό γάρ αὐτεξούσιον εἰς αὐτὸν ἐστὶν). And I say; No one plucks out of the hand of the shepherd, no one can take us out of the hand of God; but it is we who can fall from his hands because of our negligence."<sup>425</sup>

The same fundamental conception of freedom of choice is maintained for the "ascending" to eternal life, as well. With respect to eternal life as "end" (as discussed before) Origen again stresses that attaining to it is closely related to the fundamental faculty of creaturely freedom. Thus, considering the meaning of "end" (τέλος) found in the title of many Psalms according to the translation of the Seventy, he comments:

"To anyone who struggles it is victory that constitutes his "end" (τέλος) ... thus the psalms entitled 'in the end' (εἰς τέλος) announce the victory of Christ, who, according to Akylas, will be called as victory-maker (νικητοῦ), since he will have brought victory to those conquered; for he who is conquered by Christ has conquered evil which occurred in him and abolishes it being subject to Christ. Certainly there is no one who is conquered by Christ against his own will; for Christ conquers by persuading, being the Logos of God".<sup>426</sup>

Origen's conviction that eternal life as not an irreversible state

stems from two fundamental notions of his thought.

First, eternal life is a spatio-temporal condition, namely a particular "world" which is contained into the whole world.

Secondly, rational creatures are endowed with the free choice.

It is out of this view that eternal life is not related to any notion of everlasting duration and thus the conception of eternal life is consistent with the conception of time as finite.

#### **§4. Eternal death**

Like other notions in Origen's thought, "death" also is regarded as a homonym, which means that this predication applies to more than one of actual existential states. Indeed, in *Dial*, Origen expounds the notion of death perceived in a threefold way. The same perception is also found throughout his works, yet it is in *Dial*, that this question is handled *ad hoc*. In doing so, he emphasizes that he entirely grounds his views of death on the scripture.

The first kind of death is to live unto God and to die unto sin, according to the saying of Paul in Rom.6,10. This is certainly a "blessed death". This is the kind of death that Jesus died; "For in that he died, he died unto sin".<sup>427</sup>

The second kind is that according to which a man dies to God, according to the saying "The soul that sins, it shall die".<sup>428</sup>

Thirdly, it is the common conception of the death, as "Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years and died".<sup>429</sup>

Whereas the first kind of death actually constitutes the way for ascending to eternal life, the second one is that through which a rational being descends and falls to the lowest and dimmest rank of life. Recalling the scriptural figure of the "ladder" of Jacob, it could be said this: Whereas eternal life is "Christ himself"<sup>430</sup> who is on the top of that ladder, eternal death is the lowest part of it, it is the farthest

distance from Christ, the lowest rank of life among those which constitute the entire world.

Thus eternal death<sup>431</sup> is an actual status into the world and it is perceived as the counter-point of eternal life in terms of moral existential quality and, therefore, in terms of "space" within the make-up of the world.

In a passage where "heavenly Jerusalem" is attributed the meaning of eternal life,<sup>432</sup> Origen affirms that the counterpoint of it must be the scriptural "Gehenna":

"Finding Gehenna described in the gospel as a place of punishment<sup>433</sup> we searched to find out if it was mentioned anywhere in the ancient books, especially in view of the Jews' use of the word. We found that in one passage the scripture mentions a Chasm of the son of Ennom; but we are informed that instead of the word 'Chasm', though with the same meaning, the Hebrew text reads 'the Chasm of Ennom and Gehenna'. By careful study of the texts we also find that Gehenna or the Chasm of Ennom is included in the property assigned to the tribe of Benjamin<sup>434</sup> of which Jerusalem was also a part. And by considering the inference from the fact that there is a heavenly Jerusalem with the chasm of Ennom belonging to the property assigned to Benjamin, we find an allusion to the doctrine of punishments which are transformed into the means by which certain souls are purified through torment."<sup>435</sup>

In *commJohn* Origen speaks of "down to Hades or a space of this sort" (έν άδου κάτω ή τινι τοιούτω χωρίω)<sup>436</sup> which is regarded as an "end" (τέλος) in the sense of being the most distant from God. Thus, whereas eternal life is a qualitative end, in the sense of being nearest God, there is also another *end*, namely the space which is most remote from God. Indeed the "spaces" below the human rank of life are classified according to quality, in the same way that the "heavens" (namely the higher spaces) are classified. So there is explicit reference of the lowest "space"



(τόπον) which is the "darkest" among the dark ones (σκότος ἢν τό ἐν σκότεσι βαρύτερον).<sup>437</sup>

Thus, Origen speaks of "two extremes" (δύο, ἱν' οὕτως ονομάσω, ακρότητας).<sup>438</sup> The former extreme alludes to the quality of being "son of God" whereas the latter refers to the quality of being a "diametrically opposed son" (κατά διάμετρον ἐναντίον υἱόν), namely "son of the evil daemon and Satan and devil".<sup>439</sup>

This classification is also expressed in terms of "rationality". This is why, in the definition of "aeon", the "various bodies" are due to the "logical differentia" which again are due to the different "knowledge of God".<sup>440</sup> Thus the conception of "transposition" of bodies to another rank of life is portrayed as an alteration from a "more rational state" to a "more irrational" (κατάστασις λογικωτέρα μεταβάλλει εἰς ἀλογωτέραν).<sup>441</sup> Subsequently the worst damage that may occur to a rational being is expressed as the "utmost irrationality" (ἐσχάτην ἀλογίαν).<sup>442</sup>

This is the state which Origen portrays as "eternal death" (τόν ἀπέραντον θάνατον).<sup>443</sup>

The expression "eternal death" is found in a number of points throughout Origen's works. He also uses similar expressions such as "eternal punishment"<sup>444</sup> and "incurable punishments" (ταῖς ἀνηκέστοις κολλήσεσιν)<sup>445</sup> and quotes prophets who "uttered many threats about the eternal punishment" as well as the gospel where there are references to the 'Gehenna and the other endless tortures'.<sup>446</sup>

In fact, however, these references of Origen do not imply any notion of everlasting duration. His deeper conviction is that the statements about an "endless" punishment have a purpose which is educational, particularly for those who are not willing to follow a Christian way of living because of ignorance and incapability to see the full depth of Christian faith. His view is that the primary task of

Christian teaching is not to threat but to try to convince about the truth of this belief. Thus in *Cels* he states:

"For our part, because of the many and innumerable facts which have persuaded us to live the Christian life, it is our primary desire to do all in our power to make all men familiar with the whole of the doctrine of Christians. But where we find some who are prejudiced by slander againsts the Christians so that, under the impression that Christians are godless folk, they pay no attention to those who claim to teach about the divine word, there we do everything possible, in accordance with the principle of love to mankind, to establish the truth of the doctrine that there will be eternal punishment for the impious, and to make even those who are unwilling to become Christians accept the doctrine."<sup>447</sup>

Accordingly, he refers to the "simple-minded" and "unsophisticated" who "try to devote themselves to the Christian religion out of fear of the threatened punishments; so successfully are they overcome by the gospel that by fear of what are called in the scripture everlasting punishments they despise every torture devised by men against them and death and countless agonies."<sup>448</sup>

So the purpose of these "threats" is pedagogical and it is particularly the simple-minded people that Origen has in mind when he refers to this teaching. The prime concern, however, is to guide human race towards the proposed different existential attitude and action, through persuasion.

"We are concerned with the improvement of human race, whether we use threats of punishments which, we have been persuaded, are necessary for the whole world, and probably also not unbeneficial to those who will suffer them."<sup>449</sup>

It is no accident that here, where Origen refers to the realization of punishments, he does not apply them the term "eternal" at all. He uses

the figure of punishment as "cure" in order to suggest that the purpose of punishment is not an everlasting suffering but punishment constitutes a manifestation of divine dispensation towards abolition of evil.

"Moreover, the 'threats' are simply proclamations of what will happen to bad men. Similarly one might call the words of a physician threats when he says to patients 'I will cut you and apply cauterizing irons if you do not obey my orders and regulate and conduct yourself in this way or that'."<sup>450</sup>

In fact, however, Origen does not hold that there is any everlasting punishment. In chapter 2 we have already discussed how he perceives the outcome of a judgement. What constitutes "punishment" is to be transposed to a lower rank of life and to assume a body befitting such a "space" of the world. At the end of the aeon, however, there will be a new judgement and the possibility of self improvement always exists. For his conviction is that there will be a final state in which evil will have been abolished. However, his opinion is that this truth should not be said very often and before the ears of anyone:

"And the punishments that occur round Jerusalem are for those who are being refined; ... It is not right to explain to everybody all that might be said on this subject. Nor is this the appropriate moment. It is risky to commit to writing the explanation of these matters, because the multitude do not require any more instruction than that punishment is to be inflicted upon sinners. It is not of advantage to go on to the truths which lie behind it because there are people who are scarcely restrained by fear of everlasting punishment (διὰ τοὺς μόλις φόβῳ τῆς αἰωνίου κολλάσεως) from the vast flood of evil and sins that are committed in consequence of it."<sup>451</sup>

Certain passages in which "contradictions" seem to appear, should be considered in the light of this affirmation.

In *expProv* Origen speaks of the "uttermost irrationality" and

directly relates it to what he calls "endless death" (ἀνέπαυτον θάνατον).<sup>452</sup> Yet at the same point he alludes to his conviction about the final abolition of evil, averring that sinners will "of necessity" (ἀναγκάως) be rid of their sin in the aeon to come. In another chapter in the same work he affirms that "virtue destroys evil and this will happen in the aeon to come until evil is abolished".<sup>453</sup>

Thus, even when he speaks of "eternal" death, he does not actually imply any notion of everlasting duration. For there are fundamental premises in his conception of time (and in his thought, in general) that exclude any notion of everlasting duration. Such premises are the conception of time as finite, as well as the conviction about the final abolition of evil and the restoration of all, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

Hence when Origen speaks of *eternal* what he has in mind is not so much a *quantity* of time but a *quality* of existential status. In respect of this there is an essential similarity between the notions of eternal life and eternal death, as both allude to a quality of life rather than a quantity of time; they are also related by virtue of the fact that these two qualities of life are diametrically opposite and respective to the two extreme ranks of life that comprise the whole world.

In the light of this conception, certain affirmations of Origen could be understood without being regarded as self-contradictory. Thus he refers to sinners saying that "an impious one wanders about being in an eternal destruction (ἀνωθεία αἰωνία) desiring and committing what is not pleasing to God".<sup>454</sup> It is obvious that, in expressions like this, the term "eternal" cannot be taken as implying any notion of everlasting duration but it implies a certain quality of life. Thus "eternal" suggests the "extremity" of the quality and not the "duration" of a life.

Hence, the conclusion of H.Crouzel<sup>455</sup> that Origen is not quite sure about the meaning of the term *αἰώνιος* stem from the fact he has not

understood how Origen specifically uses this term. It is not a case of "hesitation" as Crouzel argues. What appears to vary is the way in which Origen presents his views, according to the audience he is speaking to. Yet, as far as his theology itself is concerned, he has no "hesitations" whatsoever. Origen's views on the question are crystal clear. It is the senses in which the term αἰώνιος is used that has eluded H. Crouzel, namely the fact that this term is used either for pedagogical reasons (in this case this term is included in scriptural quotations) or in a sense indicating a quality of life rather than quantity of time. The failure to grasp this fact lead Crouzel to the conclusion that Origen is not sure and has "hesitations ... apropos the devil's salvation".<sup>456</sup>

Out of the notion of universality of nature of all rational creatures, as discussed in chapter 2, Origen explicitly states that devil *can* be saved. His conviction about the final abolition of evil allow him to assert that the devil *will* definitely be saved. Thus, without any further comment on that extensive article of H. Crouzel, we only note that the assertion that "Origen continually hasitates about the meaning of αἰώνιος" is just not correct.

Another point which should be made is that Gehenna, as a place for punishment, is a particular "space" of the world. To be transposed there means that "consummation" and judgement has taken place. In Origen's thought "punishment" implies "judgement" and "judgement" implies "consummation" of an aeon. These notions are firmly connected and it is only once this conception has been understood that his notion of eternal death could be understood, too. In defining "judgement" as "transposition" to bodies (either "angelic" or "dark and dim" ones) he adds that "the impious will not be resurrected in the former judgement, but [they will be resurrected] in the subsequent one".<sup>457</sup> Thus Gehenna is a place where rational creatures are transposed only *after* a judgement. The same happens with eternal life.

H. Crouzel's conclusion<sup>458</sup> that Origen seems to be the first to open paradise up to the saints before the resurrection is entirely erroneous. It is Origen himself who answers such allegations: For it is Origen himself who affirms that to believe that any "alteration" (μεταβολή),<sup>459</sup> namely transposition to another rank of life<sup>460</sup> may take place "before the consummation of the aeon" (πρό τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος) is an opinion held by those who "have not grasped the meaning of the scripture and desire impossible things" (μήτε τὴν γραφὴν νενοηκέναι καὶ τῶν αδυνάτων ἐπιθυμεῖν).<sup>461</sup> For according to the existential causality this transformation (like all the transformations of bodies) take place only after a consummation and judgement.<sup>462</sup>

When Origen speaks of the dead being in Christ, he does not mean that they have been transposed to another rank of life. Christ is present in all ranks of life. The dead are still *human beings* living in the interim between their death and the expected consummation and judgement, as we discussed in chapter 3, §1. Eternal life (in the "upper Jerusalem") or eternal death (in the Gehenna) are real spatio-temporal states in which a human creature will be transposed only *after* the consummation and judgement of the whole world.

### Conclusion

Origen regards eternal life and eternal death not so much as a *duration* of existence but rather as a *quality* of existence. When he expounds the goal (expressed in a scriptural language, namely as in Gal.6,7-8) "so that we shall reap not corruption from the flesh but eternal life from the spirit",<sup>463</sup> he primarily refers to a *quality* of existence and so also when he refers to eternal death. For, as far as the *duration* of such an existence is concerned, this is determined by the principle of existential causality, which anyway applies to the entirety of Origen's world. Hence the temporal implication of the term αἰώνιος

(eternal) is only of secondary significance, since there is nothing special pertaining to the duration of the supreme or lowest rank of life vis-à-vis the rest of them. Certainly there are points where scriptural statements about endless punishment are echoed in Origen's works. However he quite clearly considers the implied notion of everlastingness as spelled out for pedagogical reasons. Strictly speaking (namely, referring to his fundamental theological and philosophical convictions), his conception of *eternal* does not suggest any notion of everlastingness.

It is obvious, therefore, that in Origen's thought the terms αἰών (aeon) and αἰώνιος (eternal) are homonyms. Unless this crucial point is grasped, misconceptions are inevitable. For it is one thing to speak of the *eternal God* yet *eternal life* is quite another and still *eternal death* is a third conception.

There is a testimony by Leontius Byzantius, part of which reads thus: "They (sc. the Origenists) say ... that the term αἰών suggests a definite time and when the scripture says that the punishment will be eternal, it implies but a definite time".<sup>464</sup>

One should always be highly careful in distinguishing between Origen's thought and what later was his *alleged* thought -not only by those hostile to it, but also by the so-called "Origenists". For quite often the latter presented views entirely alien to Origen's thought as being his ideas.<sup>465</sup> However the view that "eternal death" does not imply "endless time" is actually Origen's. For one thing, it is a view stemming from his overall theological views, and particularly his conviction that the restoration will definitely occur, as we shall discuss in chapter 5, §1. For another, it stems from his very conception of time, which excludes any notion of infinite time or everlasting duration whatsoever.

Thus the notion of "eternal" may allude either to the timeless divine reality or to a temporal status *in* the world.

Eternal life, as a certain quality of existential status, is a

*promise* of God to rational beings of the entire world. This is therefore a goal, an "end" for all those who strive for their salvation and hope to attain to eternal life. This *hope* is a fundamental characteristic of Origen's conception of time. Once the notion of eternal life has been discussed, the content of "hope" is now more clear. The fact is, however, that the eternal life itself is a temporal reality, as well. The question which then arises is this: Once the "end" of an individual rational creature has been attained and its "hope" has been fulfilled by ascending to eternal life, is there any "hope" for those being already there? Since *hope* is a fundamental characteristic of Origen's conception of time, it should exist in all ranks of life. Therefore, it should exist in the supreme one, namely the eternal life, due to its being a temporal status, too. The question which arises then is this: What is the actual content of "hope" in that rank of life? This question brings us to the study of Origen's eschatological conceptions, namely the ultimate perspectives of the world and the end of time itself. This is what we shall discuss next.



## Chapter 5: The end of Time.

### **§1. The final abolition of evil**

As an "end", eternal life constitutes a goal which has a personal and individual character. To attain to eternal life, however, does not in itself mean that evil has been extinguished in general; for this happens only to certain individual rational creatures. Yet there are creatures in other ranks of life where evil still does exist. So the world is still in a teleological spatio-temporal process.

Thus, what has hitherto been studied as "end" (τέλος) mainly pertains to an *individual* rational creature as this "end" has to do with the moral perfection of a particular being, according to the existential causality. This "end" therefore has a moral meaning and a personal character. It is certainly no accident that, in Greek, the term "teleios" (τέλειος; perfect) is directly derived from the term "telos", which is here mainly understood as moral perfection of an individual being.

Origen clearly expounds this view in a passage in *Cels* which reads thus:

"It is impossible for any man to look up to God with virtue from the beginning. For of necessity evil must exist among men from the first, as Paul says 'But when the commandment came sin revived and I died.'<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, we do not teach that for the unrighteous man to be accepted by God, it is enough for him to humble himself, conscious of his wickedness. God will only accept him *after* condemning himself for his *past life, walking* humbly because of the *past* and in an ordered way in respect of the *future*."<sup>2</sup>

This is how Origen perceives the spatio-temporal movement towards what we have discussed as "telos", namely the ascent of an

individual rational creature into eternal life. Furthermore, in the "On Psalms", he also depicts the meaning of this conception of "telos": "One should know that, like as every art or science there is an *end* (τέλος) which he who pursues this art or science strives to, so there must be an *end* (τέλος) for a rational nature; and this end is to become endowed with life in Christ, as the Apostle says."<sup>3</sup>

Beyond the "end" which pertains to the individual course of a rational being in space-time, nevertheless, Origen envisages an eschatological reality which is marked by the total abolition of evil. For his conviction is that evil, due to which the actual world came into existence, will finally be abolished. Thus he avers:

"There was [a reality] in which there was no evil and there will be [a reality] in which evil will no more exist; for the seeds of virtue are indelible".<sup>4</sup>

At another point he states accordingly: "There was [a reality] when there was no evil and there will be [a reality] when it will be not. But neither was there when there was no virtue nor will there be when it will be not. For the seeds of virtue are indelible".<sup>5</sup>

Quoting Ps. 118,70 ("Their heart became as hard as the milk which became cheese; but I stuck in the study of your law") he comments thus:

"As there was [a reality] when cheese was not cheese, so there was [a reality] when daemons were not evil. And if milk is older than cheese, it is obvious that virtue is older than evil;"<sup>6</sup>

It is in the same way that he comments on Ps.36,10 ("For yet a little while and the wicked shall not exist") stating that a "sinner will not vanish into non-being" but "he will not exist in as much as he is a sinner", namely it is the evil in him which will be extinguished.<sup>7</sup> For "evil did not exist in the beginning and it will not exist for ever".<sup>8</sup>

In the light of these passages, similar affirmations attributed

to Origen may be regarded as expressing his authentic views. By the so-called Fragment 21, P. Koetschau quotes a passage of Justinian which reads thus: "there was when that which has been lost was not lost and there will be when it will not be lost".<sup>9</sup>

In *frLuc* Origen states that "Full power"<sup>10</sup> has been given to Jesus Christ<sup>11</sup> so that he will bring peace through the blood of his cross to all those being either on earth or in the heavens;<sup>12</sup> and he adds:

"Certainly he has not yet established peace, as it becomes obvious by the fact that there is still war due to the existence of evil; however there will *definitely* be an absolute peace."<sup>13</sup>

This state which Origen visualizes in the above-mentioned passages, pertains to the entire world and indeed this state of things constitutes another conception of "end" (τέλος).

In *Cels* this conception of "end" is articulated thus:

"I will say a little in order to make clear that this remark about uniting every rational being under one law *is not only possible but even true*. ... we believe that at some time the Logos will have overcome the entire rational nature and will have transformed every soul to his own perfection, when each individual simply by the exercise of his freedom will choose what the Logos wills and will be in that state which he has chosen. And we hold that just as it is unlikely that some of the consequences of physical diseases and wounds would be too hard for any medical art, so also is it unlikely in the case of souls that any of the consequences of evil would be incapable of being cured by the rational and supreme God who is predominant on all.<sup>14</sup> For since the Logos and the healing power within him are more powerful than any evils in the soul, he applies this power to each individual according to God's will; *and the end of things is the abolition of evil*."<sup>15</sup>

It is to the Scripture that Origen appeals (namely, Wis.3,7-13)

in order to found his view that "The prophecies say much in obscure terms about the total abolition of the evils and the correction of every soul".<sup>16</sup>

So the discussion in this section shows that this "end" is not just a hope. The final occurrence of this reality constitutes a strong conviction of Origen's and it is a fundamental element of his theology to affirm that this "end" will definitely occur *for sure*.

## **§2. The perfection of all.**

It is obvious, therefore, that the term "end" is regarded as a "homonym". For there are different conceptual contents and realities denoted by the same term "end". In order to understand how Origen perceives the various conceptual contents of "end" (τέλος) one should enquire into the scriptural passages where he grounds his different conceptions of the term "end".

The conception of "end" as the final perspective in regard to attainment of eternal life by all rational creatures is grounded on the passage in Psalms 109,1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit you at my right hand, until I put your enemies a footstool under your feet" as well as similar expressions in Heb.10,13 and in I Cor. 15,25.

Thus, commenting on Psalm 9,27 ("The Lord will reign in the aeon and in the aeon of the aeon - Βασιλεύσει Κύριος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος") he states: "For the Lord must reign throughout the aeons (διὰ τῶν αἰώνων) until he has put all the enemies under his feet. ... And the Lord reigns in the aeon (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα); and it is befitting kings to provide for those who are their subjects."<sup>17</sup>

It is a strong conviction of Origen's that this "end" will *or necessity* come to pass as a concrete spatio-temporal reality in the future. Quoting Ps.40,9 ("He who now is sleeping will not raise up?") he his exegesis of the passage reads as follows:

"He says that the resurrection follows sleeping *of necessity*. For sleeping denotes death. Resurrection will follow death *of necessity*."<sup>18</sup>

It should be stressed, however, that this "necessity" does not imply what one would take as a kind of moral determinism. This "necessity" is grounded on the conviction that resurrection has been promised and "prefigured"<sup>19</sup> and "exemplified"<sup>20</sup> by Christ. In this sense, there is a prophecy that resurrection will *for sure* occur. This "necessity", therefore, is grounded on the faith and conviction that the prophecy and promise will be *fulfilled*. It is reasonable to believe that this prophecy will be fulfilled by virtue of the fact that prophecies of the scripture have already been fulfilled. On this, Origen states:

"Since ... the prophets who made many predictions of the future are proved to have spoken the truth concerning many events which have come to pass, and give proof that there was a divine Spirit in them, obviously we ought also to believe them, or rather the divine Spirit in them, concerning events which are still future."<sup>21</sup>

It is on this basis that resurrection is said to follow "of necessity". Jesus said to Peter "Whither I go you cannot follow me now; but you shall follow me afterwards"<sup>22</sup> and this is the passage on which Origen appeals in order to affirm that the expression "You shall follow me afterwards" will be said "to each one of all which the father gave in the hands of the son" (πρός ἕκαστον τῶν πάντων ὁ δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ ὁ πατήρ εἰς τὰ χεῖρας), namely to all rational creatures; yet it will not be said to all at the same time (ἐνί τόν αὐτόν καιρόν) and this is the meaning of the scriptural expression "afterwards".<sup>23</sup>

It is therefore after this *promise* of Jesus Christ to the entire world that they will follow him in due time, that resurrection is said to follow "of necessity". Thus movement in time is conditioned by what Origen calls "the *end of the promise* (τὸ τέλος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), as it

has been written in the Acts of the Apostles, in the passage 'until the times of restoration of all things (ἀχρι χρόνων αποκαταστάσεως πάντων), which God has spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began'<sup>24</sup> in Jesus Christ".<sup>25</sup>

Thus there is no question of any moral determinism in Origen's conception of time. It is rather the case of a *teleological* time, in which a divine *promise* has been given and *realized* in the first place in the person of Jesus Christ. After that event, what was established in time was *faith* and *waiting* and *expectation*, that this *promise* will definitely be *fulfilled* at the *end*.

This is the ground on which Origen enunciates his *conviction* that the entire "body" of Christ will finally be resurrected<sup>26</sup> and reiterates that this eschatological expectation is a "promise" (ἐπαγγελίαν) expressed in the scripture, namely in the Revelation of John.<sup>27</sup>

Therefore H. Crouzel's assertion that the eschatological reality which Origen visualizes through the notion of total abolition of evil is not an positive affirmation but just a "great hope" is wrong. This mistake is actually originated in the fact that H. Crouzel confines his arguments only to what is in *Princ* and from that follows a subsequent mistake, namely that this opinion of Origen's has "its antithesis in the same work". Thus Crouzel concludes that Origen appears to have "hesitations and alternating positions".<sup>28</sup>

Here is one more example in support of our view that to ground views only on the *Princ* is most likely to lead to serious mistakes about Origen's thought. The abundance of Origen's affirmations extant in Greek, according to which the final abolition of evil is not just a "great hope" (as H. Crouzel alleges) but a strong conviction, once more show that, in enquiring in Origen's thought, the Latin rendering of *Princ* should be regarded only as an ancillary source; and even in that case, it

should be read with much caution.

The notion of perfection of all rational creatures portrayed as "the resurrection of the real and more perfect body of Christ" is quite indicative of Origen's conception of the resurrection. This conception, nevertheless, is stated as "a mystery great and difficult to speculate"<sup>29</sup> while he ponders upon the passage in Ezekiel, 37,1-11, where the prophet speaks of the "dry bones":

"And when the resurrection of the real and more perfect body of Christ will take place, then the bones of Christ, which are now and in the time to come dry, will come together, bone to bone and harmony to harmony;<sup>30</sup> no one deprived of harmony will reach unto a perfect man, 'unto the measure of the stature of the fulness' of the body of 'Christ'.<sup>31</sup> And then the many bones will become one body as all the members of the body, being many, constitute one body.<sup>32</sup> And it is only God who will judge who will be a foot and hand and eye and hearing and smell, who will comprise the head, who [will be] the feet and the rest of the parts both those weaker and lower and unseemly and those honourable; it is He who will compose the body<sup>33</sup> and it is then that he will bestow more honour upon those who are now inferior, so that there will be no more 'schism in the body, but the members have the same care one for another'<sup>34</sup> and if one member suffers, all the members will suffer with it and if it is honoured, all [the members] rejoice with it."<sup>35</sup>

The conception of "resurrection" of the entire "body" of Christ is fundamental in order to understand the meaning of this "end". In fact the notion of "body" of Christ<sup>36</sup> is one of the most expressive of Origen's theology.

In *Cels* it is stated that "the divine scriptures teach the doctrine of the resurrection in a mysterious form (μυστικῶς) to those who are capable of hearing God's words with a divine power of hearing;

and they say that the temple will be rebuilt with living and precious stones. This obscurely refers to the doctrine that each of those who are united through the same Logos ... is a precious stone of the entire temple of God."<sup>37</sup>

Origen grounds this view by appealing to scriptural passages such as 1 Peter 2,5 and Eph.2,20. Again he suggests his conception of the "end" quoting a passage of Isaiah:

"Some such mysterious meaning (τινα μυστικόν ἔχει νοῦν) is contained in the passage of Isaiah addressed to Jerusalem, which reads as follows: 'Behold I prepare for thee a carbuncle as thy stone and sapphire as thy foundations, and I will make thy battlements of jasper and thy gates stones of crystal and thy wall of chosen stones. And all thy sons shall be taught by God, and thy children shall dwell in much peace, and shall be built in righteousness' ".<sup>38</sup>

At that point of *Cels* Origen states that "it is not the appropriate moment" to explain the deeper meaning of these stones and their nature.<sup>39</sup> Yet in *commJohn* he cites the same passage of Isaiah (namely, Is.54,11-14) as well as the passage Is.60,13-20. He there concludes that these sayings denote the resurrection of the entire body of Christ. For "those who feel in captivity were once in the temple and they will again return there and will be rebuilt and become the most precious<sup>40</sup> of stones; for it is also from John in the Revelation that one has the promise (ἐπαγγελίαν) that once he overcomes he will be a pillar in the temple of God and he shall no more go out."<sup>41</sup>

As Origen himself points out, these are his interpretations of the sayings of "the temple and house of God and the church and Jerusalem" whereas the entire discussion is about the expression in John 2,21, where there is reference to the "temple of his (sc. Christ's) body".<sup>42</sup> This is the context in which he speaks of "the great resurrection of the body of Christ, namely [the resurrection of] his holy



church".<sup>43</sup>

Origen's view is that the notion of "body" of Christ is expounded "mystically and in obscure way in the divine scriptures"<sup>44</sup> yet he offers an exegesis of its meaning:

"According to the teaching of the divine scriptures the body of Christ, the soul of which is the Son of God, is the whole church of God,<sup>45</sup> and that the limbs of this body, which is regarded to be a whole, are those who believe, whoever they may be. For a soul gives life to a body and moves it, since it has not the power of self-movement like a divine being; so also the Logos, which moves and acts upon the whole body for needful purposes, moves the church and each of the members of the church who do nothing apart from the Logos.".<sup>46</sup>

### **§3. The absolute end**

The notion of "end" as the "final" one is grounded on the passage in I Cor.15,28: "And when all things shall be subdued to him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" and in I Cor. 15,25; "Then comes the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God and Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

In *commJohn*, Origen states his views in a way mindful of using scriptural language:

"Since the Father gave all things into his hands and in Christ will all be made alive, justice of God is distinct from everyone being dispensed to according to his merits; this is denoted as after the [saying] 'In Christ shall all be made alive'<sup>47</sup> follows the [saying] 'But everyone in his own order'.<sup>48</sup> Again you should see that there are various orders of those who will be made alive in Christ, when the saying 'The Father has given all things unto his hands' is fulfilled,<sup>49</sup> and

you can understand it through the [saying] 'Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming, then the end' (I Cor.15,23), which end will occur with Christ at his presence, when 'He shall deliver the kingdom to God and Father" (I Cor.15, 24) having previously abolished all rule and all authority and power (I Cor.15, 24 ). And I think that they are those against which the struggle is taking place, so that there will no more exist any rule and authority and power against which this struggle [takes place]; and it is due to this that there will no more be struggle, since all rule and authority and power will have been abolished. What impels me to consider that the abolished 'all rule and all authority and all power' are those against which the struggle [takes place], is the saying of Paul which follows that phrase, namely 'For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet' (I Cor.15,25); and then 'The last enemy is abolished, namely death' (I Cor.15,26); and it certainly stands accords with the [saying] 'The Father has given all things unto his hands' (John13,3), which the apostle expresses more clearly stating: 'But when he says that all things are put under him, it is clear that [all things are put under] except for him who put all things under him' (I Cor.15, 27). And if all have been put under, it is also clear that '[all things are put under] except for him who put all things under him' (I Cor.15, 27); hence also he, about whom it has been written 'He strengthened himself against the Lord the Almighty<sup>50</sup> will be among those subject to him, having been conquered since he was inferior to the Logos and having been put under the image of God<sup>51</sup> and having been a footstool under Christ's feet."<sup>52</sup>

This passage in *commJohn* is of utmost importance. For it is here that Origen portrays his conceptions of the "end", as "perfection of all", namely as subjection of all the "enemies" of Christ to him. In the same passage he articulates another notion of "end" which is, so to

speak, the "final" one, namely when Christ "surrenders the kingdom" to the Father. It is a remarkable passage, highly indicative of his eschatological conceptions and nonetheless of his overall way of thinking as a theologian, as Origen expounds his notions almost entirely using scriptural language.

In the same work he reiterates his conception of the final end at the point where he ponders upon the meaning of the term "until" (ἕως) which "denotes a notion of time".<sup>53</sup> It is there that he states that "after the consummation of the aeon" Christ will "be with" his disciples *until* all his enemies be put by the Father as a footstool under his feet" and "*after that* , when the son surrenders the kingdom to God and Father, he [sc. the Father] will tell them 'Lo, I am with you;' ".<sup>54</sup>

It is remarkable that Origen speaks of Christ reigning "throughout the aeons" (διὰ τῶν αἰώνων) and connecting this perception to a notion of "until".<sup>55</sup> This means that it would be misleading to translate the expression διὰ τῶν αἰώνων as "eternally" -at least when one expounds Origen's thought. Further (namely, in the passage above), the notion of "until" is related to a perception of an "after that".

Thus the succession of notions is this: "*Christ reigns throughout the aeons ... until ... after that ...*".

This conception clearly indicates that the "end", perceived as the "subjection of all the enemies" to Christ, is followed by an "after that", which means that this "subjection" (namely, the perfection of all) does not in itself mark an absolute end. It is exactly through the expression "after that" that Origen portrays his notion of the final end, namely when Christ will surrender the kingdom to God and Father.

This notion of the final end is enunciated at another point in the same work, where Origen explicates his own conception of the absolute end:

"And I do believe that *this is the end* , namely when the Son

surrenders the kingdom to God and Father and when God becomes all in all".<sup>56</sup>

Origen here uses the phraseology of I Cor.15,24 and then that of I Cor.15, 28. This is a point which shows how unfair Augustine was to Origen in attributing to him an infinite repetition of worlds.

In view of our discussion so far, the opinion that Origen has no ideas which can be called eschatological is absolutely absurd. This is what Hal Koch alleges. He argues that Origen has no eschatology and there is no actual direction of the world towards an end; what he comprehended in Origen's thought is that "the whole is an uninterrupted development which is in all circumstances directed by Providence in the way which is best for all men".<sup>57</sup> However, if Origen's thought were to be characterized by one expression it would be that this thought is *earnestly and dramatically eschatological* -and this fact has totally eluded H. Koch. Our ensuing discussion in this chapter will show that the *earnest eschatological orientation* constitutes the predominant characteristic of the whole of Origen's thought.

In *commMatt*, Origen alludes to his notion of consummation as the "end" of an aeon yet not as an absolute end. It is according to this perception that he extends his views of divine judgement.<sup>58</sup> Consequent on his views of the outcome of judgement, he avers that "the just will shine"<sup>59</sup> not all of them equally but "differently" (διαφόρως) one from another; yet this "difference" pertains not to what will happen not at the end, but only "in the former stages" (κατά τὰς ἀρχάς).<sup>60</sup> What he holds is that when Jesus says that "the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father" (Matt.5,16) he "indicates a certain secret truth (μυστήριον)" which has to be elucidated.<sup>61</sup>

This is a point where again Origen provides a clear exposition of his conception of time. His view is that the saying of Jesus "Let your light so shine before men" (Matt.5,16) may refer to three different

existential states: It may refer to the apostles of Jesus during their lifetime; it also may refer to the period "after the exodus and until the resurrection", namely to the period until the end of the aeon, as discussed in chapter 3, §1. Finally, it may refer to the time "after the resurrection"<sup>62</sup> and this will continue "*until*" all rational creatures become "a perfect man"<sup>63</sup> "*and they all become one sun*"; it is then that they will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father."<sup>64</sup>

It is exactly through this notion of "*after* the resurrection ... *until* ... *all* become one sun" that Origen articulates his conception of time until the point of perfection of all rational creatures. He refers to that status saying that they "will no more shine differently as in the early stages" but they will "*all* [shine] like one sun".<sup>65</sup>

Origen is particularly conscious of the various meanings that the term "one" (ἓν) may have; thus he affirms that "the [term] 'one' is used in many ways and in many figures of speech".<sup>66</sup> So, when this term is used pertaining to the universal perfection it has a particular meaning befitting this notion; this meaning is to be "one body" of which Christ is the "head". This body, as "one", however, is not yet a historical reality. For evil still exists and this entails "diversity" which is the opposite of the desired "one" body. Yet it is due to the conviction of final abolition of evil and the "resurrection" of the entire "body" of Christ, which was "exemplified"<sup>67</sup> at the time of his incarnation, that Christ is the "head according to a prefiguration (κατὰ προτύπωσιν) of his resurrection"<sup>68</sup> which will be realized at the time when all rational creatures will be restored in "one" body. For that time marks the victory over those who "fight against the unity of the temple", namely the "body" of Christ.<sup>69</sup>

Thus Origen holds that there will be a future time at which all rational creatures will be "saved", namely they will have attained to the highest rank of life. But even in that state the radical "chasm"

between God and the world will still exist. It is quite characteristic how he portrays this relation to God in a passage commenting on Matt.3,2:

"Kingdom of heavens ... is the presence of him (sc. Christ); for it is this [presence] which grants us the partaking of the spirit and the elevation to heavens, and to the saints [it grants] the existential orientation towards unchangeable good in the aeon to come (καί τό εἰς ἀγαθόν τοῖς ἀγίοις ἐν τῷ ἐσομένῳ αἰώνι ἀτρέπτου)." <sup>70</sup>

The preposition εἰς (to) indicates a state "towards" or "near" what is "good" and "unchangeable", namely God, since it is only to Him that Origen attributes the property of being "essentially good" and "unchangeable", as we have seen. The same preposition also indicates the "goal" or "direction" of a person or condition; and it is quite remarkable that Origen does not depict this state of the "saints in the aeon to come" as "in (which would be ἐν) unchangeable good" but uses a preposition indicating that there is a further goal to be reached. The universal perfection is not the absolute end, which constitutes a reality subsequent to perfection of all, as we shall discuss next.

**The notion of "after" the eternal life.** It is a fact Origen that holds a notion of *after the eternal life*. In *Cels* he suggests this notion when he states:

"Surely these narratives, particularly when properly understood, will appear more impressive than that of Dionysus, that he was deceived by the Titans so that he left the throne of Zeus and was torn in pieces by them, that after this he was put together again and was, as it were, restored to life, and went up to heaven?<sup>71</sup> Or are the Greeks allowed to explain and allegorize this story as referring to the soul, while against us the door has been closed so that we may not give any consistent explanation which harmonizes and agrees in all respects with the scriptures inspired by the divine spirit dwelling in pure

souls? Celsus does not understand the meaning of our scriptures at all. On this account his criticism touches his own interpretation and not that of the Bible. If he had understood *what follows upon a soul which will be in eternal life* (τί ἀκολουθεῖ ψυχῇ ἐν αἰωνίῳ εσομένη ζωή) and what is the right view of its essence and origin, he would not have ridiculed in this way the idea of an immortal entering a mortal body; (our view here does not accept the Platonic doctrine of the transmigration of souls, but a different and more sublime view). He would also have understood how because of his great love to man, God made one special descent in order to convert those whom the divine scripture mystically calls 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel',<sup>72</sup> which had strayed down from the mountains; in certain parables<sup>73</sup> the shepherd is said to have come down to them, leaving on the mountains those which had not gone astray."<sup>74</sup>

What constitutes the content of "hope" of rational creatures in this existential status is not to stay "out" of the divine reality *ac infinitum* but to "enter into" the timeless eternity of God. This "hope" may be fulfilled only through Christ and this is the sense in which Origen regards Christ not only as the "road" but also as the "gate" to God;<sup>75</sup> this is the sense in which the Logos "in not yet gate to those for whom he is road and he is no more road to those for whom he is gate".<sup>76</sup>

Thus Christ is the "road" leading to an "end", namely eternal life; yet this end is not an absolute one. To those who have reached this "end" he is the "gate" through which they will enter into the timeless eternity of God. This is why Origen quotes the passage in John 11,25 "I am the resurrection" stating that Christ "is the resurrection ... but also the gate through which one enters the utmost blessedness".<sup>77</sup>

What constitutes "hope" in eternal life is exactly to "enter" into the divine reality through Christ. Subsequently Origen calls the

place of eternal life not only as "topmost edge" (ακρῶρειαν)<sup>78</sup> but he also calls it as "topmost edge of hope" (ακρῶρειαν ἐλπίδος).<sup>79</sup> Accordingly, in *homJer*, he avers:

"It is possible that we change our abode and, from being today in the lower regions to ascend and become body of God which is above; thus if we ascend and improve ourselves we shall become" "body of God which is in height".<sup>80</sup>

Commenting on Ps.56,2 ("In the shadow of your wings I shall hope until evil passes away") he states: "Until evil passes away a just person maintains his hope in the shadow of the wings of God; but once evil passes away and it is abolished into non-being, he will no more hope in shadow, but in him."<sup>81</sup>

Thus fundamental characteristics of Origen's conception of time, namely *hope* and *expectation* are maintained also in the time of eternal life, even though in that case these categories acquire a different significance.

In portraying this conception, Origen remains fully consistent with his fundamental perception of a radical "chasm" between God and the world. In *commJohn* he speaks of the "world" which was created as entirely "material ... for those who were in need of material life"; this world nevertheless "has various particular spaces".<sup>82</sup> Since to be in the world means to be material, the entire world (and even the supreme particular worlds in it) is regarded as being "down" if compared to the incorporeal divine reality. So eternal life is regarded as also being "down" "not so much in a spatial sense" (οὐ τοσούτον τόνω) (for there can be no spatial comparison between incorporeal and corporeal nature) but compared to the "immaterial and invisible and incorporeal" (τά ἀύηλα καί τὰ ἀόρατα καί τὰ ασώματα)<sup>83</sup> divine reality, which is "up" (άνω). When therefore it is said that "Christ came to seek and save that which was lost" (as in Luke, 19, 10) "he came in order to transpose those who



became citizens of what is down to what is up (ἦλθεν τοὺς κάτω καὶ πολιτογραφηθέντας ἐν τοῖς κάτω μεταστήσαι ἐπὶ τὰ ἄνω). For it is he who descended to the lowest parts of the earth,<sup>84</sup> for the sake of those existing in the lowest parts of the earth; but he also ascended above all the heavens, paving the way (οδοποιῶν) for those who will and are genuine pupils of him, that is, paving the road which leads to what is above all the heavens, namely to what is incorporeal (ἐπὶ τὰ ἔξω σωματίων).<sup>85</sup>

This affirmation of Origen has a real *spatial* significance and it is exactly stated at the point where he expounds his views of the spatial structure of the world and its relation to God. But even when Origen speaks allegorically and "not spatially"<sup>86</sup> he again uses the same phraseology.

Thus the final goal of striving for salvation is not to stay in the eternal life for ever, but to enter into the divine reality.

**The "perfection of resurrection".** The condition of universal perfection is what Origen regards as "resurrection" of the entire "body" of Christ. Since this "end", however, is not the "final". For this marks the "subjection" of all enemies to Christ and is to be followed by the "surrender" of the kingdom by the Son to the Father. So, although attaining to eternal life (even as an individual) constitutes a "resurrection", Origen visualizes a "resurrection" which is superior to any one, namely superior to either individual ascent to eternal life or the perfection of all. In *commJohn* he articulates his notion as the "perfection of resurrection" (τὸ τέλειον τῆς ἀναστάσεως) in a passage reading thus:

"And his (sc. Christ's) resurrection is completed in three days in all. This is why resurrection both took place and will take place, since we are buried with Christ and resurrected with him,<sup>87</sup> for the [expression] 'we are resurrected with him' is not enough to express the

completeness of resurrection. 'In Christ shall all be made alive, but every one in his own order; Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming, then the end.'<sup>88</sup> For it was one kind of resurrection his being in the paradise of God on the first day<sup>89</sup> and it was also a kind of resurrection when he is seeming saying 'Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father;'.<sup>90</sup> But *the perfection of resurrection* (τό τέλειον τῆς ἀναστάσεως) was when he ascended to the Father."<sup>91</sup>

In view of this conception, eternal life is not the "final end". In this state, rational beings are "at the right hand of wisdom"<sup>92</sup> and in real "life",<sup>93</sup> it is a state of resurrection of the entire "body" of Christ, but it is not a state *in* the Father. It is a reality *in the world* and, thus, in time. Therefore this reality is separated from the divine eternity by a radical "chasm". The very fact of being *in* the world is the cause due to which "viewing" of God "as he is"<sup>94</sup> is impossible, since "not even the beings of the supreme rank of life see God, not due to their incapability but due to God's incorporeality."<sup>95</sup> For in the Wisdom of God there are "apperceptions" (θεωρήματα) which can never be apprehended by any creature<sup>96</sup> at all, not only a human one but any creature<sup>97</sup> as they can be known only to the Son and to the Holy Spirit and to no one else.

As we emphasized in chapter 1, Origen portrays the radical transcendence of God to the world in terms of space (expressed as corporeality) and time. In the passage above, this "chasm" was expressed in terms of corporeality; yet Origen expresses it in terms of time, too:

"Mind, which is subject to creation and because of that [it is also subject] to time, does not see God as he is. This is why it has not simply been said 'No one has seen God' (John,1, 18) but the [word] 'ever' (Πύποτε) (John,1, 18), which denotes a notion of time (χρονικόν τι), has

been added, so that the saying has a meaning like this; as long as it is possible to speak of 'ever' (which implies a notion of being in a lower status) ("ὅσον χρόνον τό Πρώποτε δύναται ῥέχεσθαι, ὡς σημαίνον τι ὑποκείμενον) mind is ruined (εμνήσεται) in corporeal life. This is why mind cannot see God by an intellectual act. And we comprehend him vaguely and to the extent that it is possible to us through the theological conceptions which we hold of him; but God himself has a comprehension of himself not through something like that (sc. through something like theological conceptions) but in a way appropriate to himself, since he is both the comprehension and what is comprehended. This is why it is only the son who knows him, as he is comprehended by the Father and he comprehends the Father."<sup>98</sup>

What, therefore, rational creatures "see" from the eternal life's point of view is not God Himself, but it is it is a view through the Logos, according to the saying in John 14,9, "He that has seen me has seen the Father". This has been said "because he who has seen the Logos of God, contemplates God, from the Logos ascending to God; for it is impossible to contemplate God, unless through the Logos. And he who contemplates the wisdom, whom God made before the aeons toward his works,<sup>99</sup> he ascends from having known wisdom to her Father; for it is impossible to comprehend God of wisdom, unless through being elevated to this by wisdom."<sup>100</sup> "Thus the saviour is all the flights of steps, the first, as it were, of these being his human nature; and boarding on it we walk up to the rest of his, as he is the entire road of stairs, so that we can ascend through him who is also of the nature of angels as well as [of the nature] of the rest of the higher powers."<sup>101</sup>

In this sense, therefore, the existential status in eternal life is the closest to God, compared to the rest of ranks of life; yet is is "outside" the divine reality. In Origen's view, the "blessed" and "saints" do not live *in* God but *vis-à-vis* (ἐναντίον; face to face) God and it is

"only them" who live in this way.<sup>102</sup>

**The absolute end.** Thus Origen makes the distinction of stages, as it were, of resurrection; of them it is "to ascend to the Father" that is regarded as "the perfection of resurrection".<sup>103</sup> It is indeed through this notion that he portrays his conception of the absolute end. And it is exactly this "end" that Origen regards as "restoration" (ἀποκατάστασις).<sup>104</sup>

The very word "apokatastasis" (ἀποκατάστασις) is used in Acts, 3,21, whereas the verb ἀποκαθιστώ (to restore) is used in Jeremiah, 10,10-29. In *hom.Jer* Origen considers the passage Jer.10,19 ("Therefore thus said the Lord; If you return I will restore (ἀποκαταστήσω) you") and comments on that as follows:

"These words are said to each one whom God will call to return to him. And it seems to me that a certain secret truth (μυστήριον) is denoted by the expression 'I will restore you'. No one is restored to a place if he has not been there before; restoration (ἢ ἀποκατάστασις) is understood as a return to a familiar state. If a bone of mine is dislocated, the doctor tries to make a restoration (ἀποκατάστασιν) of the bone. When one is exiled from his country, either fairly or unfairly, and then acquires the right of staying in his country lawfully, he is restored (ἀνεκατέστη) to his country. In the same sense you should understand a soldier expelled from his troop and then restored (ἀποκαθισταμένου). Thus he here says to us who have gone away that, if we return, he will restore (ἀποκαταστήσει) us. Indeed such is the *enc of the promise* (τό τέλος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), as it has been written in the Acts of the apostles in [the passage] 'until the times of restoration of all things (ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων), which God has spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began' (Acts,3,21) in Jesus Christ".<sup>105</sup> The three examples which Origen uses in order to explain the deeper meaning of "restoration" have been chosen not by

chance; for all three of them signify Origen's conception of both the "fall" and resurrection. Thus, in *se/ps*, he describes the resurrection as the "receiving back ... our ancient fatherland".<sup>106</sup>

In view of the analysis of Origen's in *homJer*, H. Crouzel's assertion that the notion of *ἀποκατάστασις* (restoration) is drawn only from I Corinthians 15,23-28, is not correct.<sup>107</sup>

The conviction that "apokatastasis" will definitely occur is, therefore, based on the fact that this has been *promised* by God and it has also been "exemplified" and "prefigured" through the resurrection.<sup>108</sup> This notion of restoration pre-eminently underlines the teleological character of Origen's conception of time. For restoration is the goal towards which the entire world is directed. It is according to this conception that he comments on the passage of Ezekiel<sup>109</sup> "And he will restore his vines" stating that "they will be restored (ἀποκαταστήσονται) in Christ. It is in him that the *prophecy* will reach its *end* (Τούτω καταπαύσει ἡ προφητεία)".<sup>110</sup>

In *commMatt* Origen clearly avers that "apokatastasis" marks the "end of things" as he states:

"For even if we become able to see God by our mind or heart, we do not see him 'as he is' (I John,3,2) but as he appears to us according to his dispensation; but at the *end of things* (ἐνί δέ τῳ τέλει τῶν πραγμάτων) and at the "*restoration* (ἀποκαταστάσεως) of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began' (Acts, 3, 21) we shall see him not like now, that He does not seem as he actually is, but as it is appropriate to that time, which he is".<sup>111</sup>

When the restoration of all rational beings will have taken place, the entirety of Christ's resurrected "body" will enter into the divine being. This is how the realization of the "perfection of resurrection", the "surrender" of the kingdom from Christ to the Father

and the absolute end is portrayed. This final end will be realized through a "jump" of this "body" through Christ unto the radically transcendent reality over the "chasm" which defines the world as the "out" of God. If Origen holds the notion of "*after* the eternal life" this is exactly in order to articulate what is going to happen then, namely the "perfection of resurrection" as entering into the divine reality.

In *commJohn* Origen comments on the saying in John 4,14 "but the water I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to eternal life".<sup>112</sup> He regards this "springing" as reminiscent of a similar notion, namely the "skipping" of the bridegroom, as in the Song of Songs, a scriptural book which he regards as containing the most secret truths of Christian faith.<sup>113</sup> The promise of Jesus to the Samaritan woman (as in the above-mentioned passage in John 4,14) is the promise of Christ to the soul, for its elevation to the eternal life through Christ. Yet it is exactly there that Origen affirms that, although this promised eternal life constitutes a fulfilment of Christ's promise to the world, there is nevertheless an "after" this eternal life, which will follow the elevation of rational creatures to it. This is how he articulates this notion of "after the eternal life":

"And surely he (sc. who will inherit eternal life) *will jump after the eternal life* unto the Father who is *above the eternal life*; for Christ is life,<sup>114</sup> but he who is greater than Christ<sup>115</sup> is greater than life".<sup>116</sup>

Not only the fact that "life" here is put in the context of attaining to eternal life, but also other explicit statements of Origen that the term "life" par excellence pertains to the eternal one, show that he holds that rational beings have a perspective which is *beyond* eternal life. The spatio-temporal character of eternal life is again implied here. Thus, in the passage above, Origen indicates the temporal element by the term *after the eternal life*, whereas he indicates the

spatial element by the term *above the eternal life*. Both those notions suggest to the divine reality as being *beyond* the world.

It is also quite significant that this perspective of rational beings is portrayed as "greater" than "life". What Origen actually means here is that this "jump" marks the "end" of the world's existence itself. When he affirms that "Christ is life" and the Father "is greater than life" he actually alludes to the radical transcendence of God to space and time. We should recall at this point, Origen's affirmation, discussed in chapter 1, that of all conceptions of Christ it is only Wisdom and Logos that exist in themselves regardless of the existence of the world; the rest of the conceptions of Christ are related to the existence of the world. Therefore, to "jump" to a reality which is *after* and *above* the world, is to enter into a reality which is "greater" than "life", that is, a reality beyond the world -namely, the divine reality.

This notion of an expected "jump" after the eternal life is very significant in order to understand Origen's view of the eschatological perspectives of the world. This is why, in *Cels*, he refers to Jesus Christ who "passed through the heavens"<sup>117</sup> and "*promised* those that had genuinely learnt the things of God and who lived lives worthy of them that he would lead them on to what is *above the world*"; for he says "So that *where* I go, you may be also".<sup>118</sup>

It is in the light of this view that Origen's conception of the "perfection" of resurrection should be understood. When he literally speaks of "space" (τόπου),<sup>119</sup> he refers to Christ as him who "came in order to transpose those who became citizens of what is down to what is up. For it is him who descended to the lowest parts of the earth,<sup>120</sup> for the sake of those being in the lowest parts of the earth; but he also *ascended above all the heavens*, paving the *way for those* who will be and are genuine pupils to his, namely paving the road which leads to what is *above all the heavens*, that is to what is *incorporeal*."<sup>121</sup>

This analysis has a literal spatial meaning, as Origen himself states. However, continuing this analysis and speaking "not spatially" (οὐ τὸνικῶς)<sup>122</sup> he explains the passage "[He who] ascended up far above all heavens"<sup>123</sup> by using the same language as in the case of literally speaking of "space":

"For the intelligible ascent of that soul (sc. Christ's soul) *leaped over all the heavens* so that it can be said that it reached *God himself*.".<sup>124</sup>

It is generally known that the figures of speech indicate one's overall philosophical perception of the reality. This is what happens with Origen here. Beyond that, however, he uses the same expressions not only when he speaks in allegories using figures, but also when he expounds literally his eschatological perceptions. For he holds that certain scriptural affirmations may be understood both "non-spatially" (οὐδέ τὸνικῶς) and "spatially" (τὸνικῶς)<sup>125</sup> according to the perception of the world as consisting of particular "spaces" (χωρίοις) of different qualities.

In *se/Ps* there is also a reference to this notion of Christ's "entering" into the divine reality after his resurrection. Commenting on Ps.23,8 ("and be ye lifted up eternal gates") he states:

"He says to them the 'be ye lifted up' as if they were rational beings; and certainly they are spiritual and not temporary because they are immaterial and intangible (διὰ τὸ ἀύθον καὶ ἀκήρατον).<sup>126</sup>

It is through this figure of speech that Origen visualizes Christ's "returning" to the Father or what he calls as "the perfection of resurrection". It is in a similar figure that he portrays the return of the entire resurrected "body" of Christ to the divine reality. Since the resurrection of Christ exemplified what will happen at the "end" and was a prefiguration of the eschatological resurrection of the entirety of the world, it is in the same way, therefore, that his resurrected



"body" (that is, the entirety of rational creatures) will "enter" into the divine being.

A careful study of a passage in *Cels* again shows that Origen expresses the same notion there, namely that there is a reality above "the arc of heavens" (which, in the same work is denoting eternal life<sup>127</sup> and this reality is "above the heavens" (ὑπερὸν οὐρανόν) and "outside the world".<sup>128</sup> The passage reads thus:

"Even an uneducated Christian is convinced that every place in the world is a part of the whole, since the whole world is a temple of God; and he prays in any place,<sup>129</sup> and by shutting the eyes of sense and raising those of the soul he *ascends above the entire world* (ὑπεραναβαίνει τόν ὅλον κόσμον). He does not stop even at *the arc of heaven* (καί οὐδ' ἐνί τήν ἀψίδα ἵσταται τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), but comes in mind to *the super-celestial region* (ὑπερὸν οὐρανόν ... τόπον),<sup>130</sup> being guided by the Divine Spirit and being as it were *outside the world* he sends up his prayer to God. His prayer is not concerned with any everyday matters; for he has learnt from Jesus to seek for nothing small, that is sensible, but only for things that are great and truly divine which, as God's gifts, help *in the walking towards to the blessedness with Him* attained *through His son* who is the Logos of God".<sup>131</sup>

Certainly this passage refers to an personal experience of a man during his praying. But this experience is portrayed in terms of Origen's conception of both the relation of the world to God and the final perspective of the world, namely to live "with" God in his eternal being.

This final goal, namely to live "with" God, is found in the same work and articulated in a way really befitting Origen's scrupulous use of the language. It is characteristic that, in order to denote the final being "with" God, he does not use any word directly denoting "place", but he uses the word διεξαγωγή which generally alludes to "a way of

living".<sup>132</sup> Thus he again refers to the souls striving "to reach to become in communion (κοινωνίαν) with God" and "to attain to living with God and with what is befitting divine life".<sup>133</sup> For to Origen the end of the world lies not simply in reaching an "abode" which is nearest God but to become "associated with" God.

Accordingly, in *expProv*, he avers that he who follows a life according to the word of Christ "will not only have intercourse (προσομιλήσει) with God but also he will become cohabitee (σύνοικος) with him".<sup>134</sup>

This passage requires a clear rendering of the terms used, because their nuances are vital. The translation above, although near to the text, is but the nearest way to render this Greek text into English. The terms used are "prosomilo" (προσομιλώ) and "synoikos" (σύνοικος). In a sense, both may mean "to be associated with". But there is a difference which is very significant for the subject discussed here. The verb προσομιλώ means "to hold an intercourse with" or "to converse with". In the passage above, this term alludes to eternal life and denotes the best communication of creatures with God; yet creatures are regarded to live in a "place" which is "out" of the divine being. The adjective σύνοικος, however, denotes something slightly (but significantly) different; to be σύνοικος means "to dwell in the same house with" or "to enter the house as an inmate".<sup>135</sup> This is what Origen here articulates as the final perspective of a rational creature, namely to "enter" into the divine reality.

It is in the light of this conception of the "end" that expressions like "the teaching about the blessed life and [the teaching about] the communion with God" (τὴν περὶ τῆς μακαρίας ζωῆς διδασκαλίαν καὶ τὴν περὶ τῆς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον κοινωνίας)<sup>136</sup> should be understood. For Origen, who never uses superfluous phrases, here alludes to two different eschatological conceptions, namely the eternal life and the final end.

Accordingly, in the context of his perception that to be *in* the world, in itself, is an obstacle to "seeing" God,<sup>137</sup> he affirms that in order to "see" the "face of God" a human being has to be "altered" (μεταβάλλειν σε δεῖ) and to become not just "angel" but "to become God" (ἤδη καὶ θεόν).<sup>138</sup> This is the final goal which, in another of his works, Origen alludes to by the expression "to be deified".<sup>139</sup>

There is therefore a final "end" which Origen articulates using terms such as "*will jump after the eternal life* unto the Father who is *above the eternal life* ; *promised* ... that he would lead them on to what is *above the world* ... *above all the heavens* , that is to what is *incorporeal* ."; "*leaped over all the heavens* " and ... reached *God himself* ."; "He does not stop even at *the arc of heaven* , but comes in mind to *the super-celestial region*... being ... *outside the world* ... *in the walking towards to the blessedness with Him* attained through His , "will not only hold intercourse (προσομιλήσει) with God but also he *will become associate with (σύνουκος) Him* ."; the *communion with God* ; to *become God* ; and, to become *deified* .

This is the kind of life, namely the life with the Father, which Origen calls as "calm and dimensionless life" (αταράχου καὶ αδιαστάτου ζωής).<sup>140</sup> For this alludes to a reality transcendent to both space and time. Until it comes to pass, however, rational beings are "outside" the divine life, as they are in the world.

At this point we quote a statement in *se/Ps*, 60, which epitomizes, in the most explicit manner, Origen's conception of eternal life with respect to divine life; in the same passage there is reference to the notion of "holy mountain" as suggesting eternal life, according to our analyses in chapter 4, §1; it is also here that the notion of *after* the eternal life is clearly enunciated. The passage reads thus:

"The Saviour is the real and persistent *hope* of the saints; ... Once one has been perfected, he sojourns (ἡρπυκεῖ) in the aeons in that

tabernacle (έν εκείνω τώ σκηνώματι); this is suggested by the [saying] "Who will encamp in your holy mountain"? (Ps.14,1). For what is *eterna*, is this tabernacle, which was made by the Lord and not by man. (Αιώνιον γάρ τούτο ταυτόν όν τή σκηνή, ήν έπηξεν ό Κύριος καί ούκ άνθρωπος). However, whilst this tabernacle is a state of perfection, so that it is the Holy of holies, there is a state *after that*, which is superior to rational creatures, in which state they (sc. rational creatures) will be *in* the Father and the Son, or rather *in the Trinity*. This is why it is has been said about *sojourning* in the aeons and not *inhabiting* in the tabernacle. (Πλήν εί καί ούτω τελειότητος έχει ή τοιαύτη σκηνή, ως καί Αγία τών αγίων είναι, άλλ' ούν εστι μετ' αυτήν κατάστασις υπερέχουσα τών λογικών, καθ' ήν έσονται έν Πατρί καί Υιώ, μάλλον δέ τή Τριάδι' διό παρourkeín είς τού αιώνας, αλλ' ού κατοικείν έν τώ σκηνώματι είρηται).".

In this superb passage, the final destination of rational creatures is quite vividly portrayed as moving into a state *after* eternal life -and this state is the divine reality itself. To exist in space-time is *sojourning*, that is, a *temporary* status which had a beginning and will come to an end. And this *end* is clearly envisaged as "entering into" the divine life.

Only once how Origen perceives eternal life has been grasped, what seems paradoxical may well be understood: Origen regards this life both *eternal* and *temporary* -as it is explicated in the aforestated passage. If one considers the conception of *eternal* only in terms of *duration* (and indeed, everlasting duration), then the association of the terms "eternal" and "temporary" may seem as inwardly contradictory. But it is not; and this can be grasped only if the real meaning of eternal life (as discussed in chapter 4) has been properly understood.

Thus the state of eternal life is a place where rational beings *wait* to enter into the divine reality through Christ. This "entering" constitutes their *hope* in that existential status. While to those still =

in the lower ranks of life, Christ is the "road" (being not yet the "gate" to them), he is the "gate" (being not the road any more) to those who will finally "jump" from the eternal life to the Father, who is *after* and *above* the eternal life. For Origen is clear in enunciating his view that Christ is the *gate* leading *to God*.<sup>141</sup>

Accordingly, regarding the passage Ps.21,28 ("For the kingdom is of the Lord and he reigns upon the nations") he comments thus:

"For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. It is the same as if he were saying that [this will happen] when all the wicked will become just, having stopped to be earthly and corruptible".<sup>142</sup>

It is quite remarkable to see how Origen comments Ps.21,31 ("And my soul lives in him"). The expression "*in* him" (namely, God) is a challenge to his exegesis, but he does face it. He again alludes to his statement about the soul of Christ stated in *comm.John*: "For the intelligible ascent of that soul *leaped over all the heavens* so that it can be said that it reached *God himself*".<sup>143</sup> It is in the light of this passage that he provides this exegesis on the above-mentioned passage of the Psalms: "It is only the soul of God which lives in God, having knowledge not only of what is created (τῶν γεγονότων) but also of God himself."<sup>144</sup> So, in a passage suggesting a notion of being *in* God Origen remains consistent with his fundamental view that the world is *out* of God; and he does so although he here has to employ an allegory of the term "soul". For, strictly speaking, he regards the term "soul" as applying only to the human rank of life.<sup>145</sup>

So Origen holds that there will be an "end" of the kingdom of Christ and it is exactly on the Psalms as well as on Paul that he grounds this view. This "end" will occur when all rational beings will have been raised up to the eternal life. It is certainly no accident that he expresses this conception by using the same words as in the

above-mentioned passages of the Scripture. And the core of this conception exactly lies in the expression that Christ will "reign *until*", as the very term "until" denotes a temporal termination of this "reign".

In *comm. John* Origen states the passage of John 13,3; "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came out of God and he goes to God, he rises from the supper."; and the text continues with Origen's own comment: "Surely then those which did not formerly exist have been given into the hands of Christ; and not some of them have [been given] whereas some have not [been given], but all of them [have been given to the hands of Christ]; this is what David sees through the spirit and says the [saying] 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit you at my right hand, until I put your enemies a footstool under your feet'."<sup>146</sup>

Thus, as regards the eschatology of Origen, there are two distinct conceptions of the end:

First, the "end" alludes to the subjection of the entire world to the Son; this is portrayed as the resurrection of the entire "body" of Christ. This end, however, it is not the final end.

Secondly, the "end" is conceived as the subjection of the Son to the Father. It will occur when the entire world, existentially being in the status portrayed as "resurrected" body of Christ, "jumps" through Christ into the timeless being of God and time reaches its end. This marks the absolute end of the world and is perceived as the final end.

This is a fundamental distinction which should be made in Origen's conception of the end. For unless this distinction has been made there will be a lot of confusion about what Origen really held. This confusion has not been avoided, as we shall discuss later in this chapter.

It is in view of these different conceptions of the "end" that certain interpretations of Origen should be understood. He considers the

saying about Christ in Revelation, namely that he is "first and last".<sup>147</sup> Commenting on this, he states that Christ "regarded as *first* is different from being the Alpha and the ἀρχή (beginning); and regarded as *last*, he is different from being the Omega and the end".<sup>148</sup> What he suggests here is the two different conceptions of the term "end" as discussed above. For Christ is understood to be "first" regarded in his relation to the creation; he is the wisdom who "willed" "to establish a creative relation to the future beings" and brought them into being, as Logos of God. But he is "Alpha and ἀρχή" regarded as wisdom, who, in herself, has nothing to do with creation. Accordingly, Christ is "last" regarded as he who will "surrender the kingdom to the Father"; that is, he is again regarded in his creation with the creation. But he is "Omega and end" if one regards the final end, when there will be no more world and "God will be all in all", as we discuss later in this chapter. In short, Christ's conception as "first and last" allude to his being the Logos, whereas his conception as "beginning and end" allude to his being the Wisdom of God.

According to this distinction, in the "On Proverbs", Origen provides a similar exegesis on the passage Prov.1,7 "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". He there states that when in the Revelation is said "I am the beginning and the end" (Rev.1,8), Christ is the "beginning" since he gave the creatures their being; and he is the "end" due to his being the means for their perfection.<sup>149</sup>

These different conceptions of "end" can also be traced in the Latin rendering of *Princ.* Indeed it is only after the distinction of the various meanings of "end" has been made (namely, what Origen calls as "clarifying the homonyms") that a study of this translation may be possible. For, as we shall argue, many of the misconceptions surrounding Origen's thought are due to failure to regard the notion of "end" as a homonym and to "clarify" it properly, namely to enquire into

which "end" the text refers to. In the light of our previous discussion, therefore, we may now consider how Origen's thought appears in *Princ*:

"The end of the world and the consummation will come when every soul shall be visited with the penalties due for its sins. This time, when everyone shall pay what he owes, is known to God alone. We believe, however, that the goodness of God through Christ will restore this entire creation to one end,<sup>150</sup> even his enemies being conquered and subdued. For so says the holy scripture: 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.'<sup>151</sup> And if it is not very evident what the prophetic language here means, let us learn from Paul the Apostle, who says more openly, 'Christ must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.'<sup>152</sup> But if even this clear declaration of the Apostle is not sufficient to inform us what is the meaning of 'putting enemies under his feet', hear further what he says in the words that follow: 'For all things must be made subject to him.'<sup>153</sup> What then is this 'subjection', by which 'all things must be made subject' to Christ? In my opinion it is the same subjection by which we too desire to be subjected to him, and by which the apostles and all the saints who have followed Christ were subject to him. For the word subjection, when used of our subjection to Christ, implies the salvation, proceeding from Christ, of those who are subject; as David also said, 'Shall not my soul be subject to God? For of him cometh my salvation'.<sup>154</sup>

There is particular care in dealing with the meaning of this "subjection". As the question seems to have been controversial, he refers to "the heretics" who do not understand the real meaning of the apostolic words and takes some further steps towards clarifying how he perceives the meaning of the "subjection" of the son to the Father. Thus "the subjection of Christ to the Father reveals the blessedness of our perfection and announces the crowning glory of the work



undertaken by him, since he offers to the Father not only the sum total of all ruling and reigning which he has amended throughout the entire universe but also the laws, corrected and renewed, of the obedience and subjection due from the human race." So "when the Son is said to be subjected to the Father the perfect restoration of the entire creation is announced, so when his enemies are said to be subjected to the Son of God we are to understand this to involve the salvation of those subjected and the restoration of those that have been lost."<sup>155</sup>

So the view that Christ "must reign till he puts his enemies under his feet"<sup>156</sup> is found alike in the writings in Greek. It is also stated that Christ was incarnated "to renew the capacity not only for ruling and reigning but also for obeying" and it was he who "first fulfilled in himself what he wished to be fulfilled by others and not only became obedient to the Father 'even unto the death of the cross',<sup>157</sup> but also at the consummation of the age, by his inclusion in himself of all those whom he subjected to the Father and who through him come to salvation, he himself, with them and in them, is also said to be 'subjected' to the Father, when 'all things' shall 'subsist in him' and he shall be the 'head of all things' and in him shall be the 'fulness' of those who obtain salvation. This then is what the apostle says of him: 'When all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected unto him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all'."<sup>158</sup>

So when it is stated that "in all those periods and ages to come ... the dispersion and division of the one beginning is to be restored to one and the same end",<sup>159</sup> it is the "end" as "restoration" that this passage refers to.

It is obvious, therefore, that the notion of "subjection" of the entire world to Christ implies the *perfection* of the world; that is, it pertains to the *moral* status of the world. The *natural* status of this,

however, remains unchanged; the world does exist, as it previously did, as a natural reality. The "subjection" to Christ means the "salvation" of the entirety of rational creatures, namely the "ascent" of them all to the supreme rank of life.

Accordingly, after the analysis of "that earth", namely eternal life,<sup>160</sup> the text concludes as follows:

"This, then, is how we must suppose that events happen in the consummation and restitution of all things, namely, that souls, advancing and ascending little by little in due measure and order, first attain to that other earth and the instruction that is in it, and are prepared for those better precepts to which nothing can ever be added. For in the place of 'stewards' and 'governors'<sup>161</sup> Christ the Lord, who is King of all, will himself take over the kingdom; ... and will reign in them until such time as he subjects them to the Father who subjected all things to him (I Cor.15,28); or in other words, when they have been rendered capable of receiving God, then God will be to them 'all in all'."<sup>162</sup>

In view of Origen's notions as found in his works in Greek one may discern similar ones behind a vague rendering of the text of *Princ*. Thus a certain passage reads as follows: "and just as by his present coming he has fulfilled that law which has a 'shadow of the good things to come',<sup>163</sup> so also by that glorious coming the shadow of his first coming will be fulfilled and brought to *perfection*. For the prophet has spoken of it thus: 'The breath of our countenance is Christ the Lord, of whom we said that under his shadow we shall live among the nations',<sup>164</sup> that is, at the time when he shall duly transfer all the saints *from the temporal to the eternal* gospel, to use a phrase employed by John in the Apocalypse, where he speaks of the 'eternal gospel':".<sup>165</sup>

It is there that one may discern the notion of the perfection of

resurrection as well as that this "perfection" pertains to the entire body of Christ as his incarnation was a prefiguration of that eschatological resurrection. Indeed, even the notion of "jump" of this resurrected body to the divine eternity can be traced behind the phrase that Christ shall "transfer all the saints from the temporal to the eternal gospel". The distinction between "temporal" and "eternal" clearly indicates that this "transfer" is from a temporal to a timeless reality, namely to the divine one. The "saints" no more "contemplate" the eternal gospel but they are "transferred" into it. It is exactly then that the "perfection" of resurrection is realized, in exactly the same sense that Origen speaks of "perfection of resurrection" in *commJohn*.

At this point Koetschau incorporates the so-called Fragment 30, in which Justinian attributes to Origen a notion of "continuous passion" of Christ. The last phrase of this passage, however, regarded against the background of the Latin text above, stands in accordance with Origen's authentic views. For the passage concludes by Justinian's assertion that according to Origen this "suffering" of Christ "will happen in the ages to come until the end of the whole world...".<sup>166</sup> That the real meaning of this "passion" has entirely eluded Justinian has been discussed in chapter 3. What is of significance for the question at hand, however, is that the "perfection" of resurrection and the "transfer" of rational beings from what is "temporal" to what is "eternal" is connected to the notion of the "end of the whole world". This sequence of notions, as extended in *Princ*, is indeed what Origen really held about the eschatological course of the world and its final destination and end.

**The dissolution of corporeality into non-being.** This notion of "after the eternal life" and the final end of the world alludes exactly to corporeality dissolved into non-being. For the "entering" into the divine reality and to be "in communion" with God and indeed to be "deified"

actually implies and entails that there will be no more any radical "chasm" between God and the world. This, in the final analysis, means that what constitutes the make-up of the world, namely space and time, will come to an end. The termination of the existence of corporeal nature is just a particular consequence of the reality of space coming to an end. For corporeal nature is but a demonstration of the reality of space, which, in Origen's works, is particularly expressed in terms of *corporeality*.

In fact, Origen holds a conception of a perspective of corporeal nature to be dissolved into non-being. In *exhMar* he affirms that "in God" there are "apperceptions ... which no nature which is in a body is able to comprehend if it does not get rid of *any body* (μή πρότερον αναλαλῆσα παντός σώματος)".<sup>167</sup> This reality alludes to the entering into the divine reality, as it is clearly suggested from the continuation of this passage. Origen refers to the "liberation" of the entire creation,<sup>168</sup> namely the dissolution of heavenly bodies into incorporeality and he also alludes to his notion that in Christ there are "apperceptions" which can be comprehended only by him. It is an eschatological hope that these apperceptions will be comprehended when the absolute end will occur. Thus he states:

"For I am persuaded that God is keeping and storing in himself far greater wonders than are seen by sun, moon, and the choir of stars, and even by the holy angels whom God made 'spirit' and 'flame of fire',<sup>169</sup> so that he may reveal them when the whole creation is liberated from the bondage of the enemy to the liberty of the glory of the children of God."<sup>170</sup> This is one of the points where the perspectives of corporeal nature are directly related to the final abolition of evil and the subsequent absolute end.

Accordingly, at another point he states: "And I think that it is they who with a great desire to come to union with God (πρός τό

κοινωνήσαι τῷ Θεῷ) withdraw and separate their soul not only from the earthly body but also from *any body* (οὐ μόνον ἀπό τοῦ γήινου σώματος ἀλλὰ καί ἀπό παντός σώματος) that love God with all their soul;"<sup>171</sup> In the same work he affirms that God "shows Himself to those to whom He judges right to appear, so far as it is possible for God to be known to man and for human soul *which is still in a body* (ανθρώπου δέ ψυχῇ ἐτι ούσα ἐν σώματι) to know God."<sup>172</sup>

Even the creatures of the highest ranks of life do not "see" God "not because of their incapacity, but because of God's incorporeality"; for "mind" which is bound with both time and corporeality cannot see God, because He is invisible from a "material life's" point of view. Thus it is not possible to see God due to the very fact that creatures are "involved with matter".<sup>173</sup>

As Origen affirms at this point, mind is involved with matter due to the very fact that it is *created*. This is the notion through which any allegation of Origen's views' affinity to the Platonic ones is excluded. What is originated in the "fall" is not the *change* of existential status of any pre-existing incorporeal world but it is the *creation* itself of rational creatures. Thus the fundamental cause of not "seeing" God is not "corporeality" itself, but it is the very fact that rational beings have been *created* as individual personal hypostases. And to be in the actual creation, in itself, *of necessity* entails to be in time as well as in corporeality. This is how his views on this subject are fundamentally different from those of Plato's. Certainly "material life" is a "fallen" status<sup>174</sup> yet this notion has nothing to do with the Platonic views. For it is not a fallen status of any pre-existing personal individual incorporeal creatures. It is a status of temporal and corporeal beings; their being "fallen" is understood to lie in the fact that they are *created as individuals* and not to the fact that they are by essence temporal and corporeal -which is an essential and

inescapable characteristic of being in the actual creation.

What Origen actually portrays by affirmations like these is the "hope" to return to God, the "fulfilment" of the "final" end as it has been exemplified and prefigured in the person of Jesus Christ. This is why, in the same paragraph, he cites scriptural passages like "When shall I arrive and see the face of God?"<sup>175</sup> and "I shall pass through in the place of the wonderful tabernacle which is located as far as the house of God (ἐως τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ Θεοῦ), with a voice of rejoicing and of confession of a festal sound."<sup>176</sup>

It is remarkable that he cites those scriptural passages that most properly allude to his view of eternal life and the final end. Thus he cites the passage of the Psalms where the "final end" is implied, as it speaks of "arrival" (that is, reaching the final point of a destination) and "seeing the face of God" which, in Origen's view, is possible only when *any body* has been discarded. On the other hand, he cites the passage in Acts where the eternal life is spoken of as a place where one does not "arrive" but he "passes through", which implies that this place is not a final destination but a temporary residence; and it is also stated that this place is located "as far as the house of God" (ἐως τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ Θεοῦ) but it is not *in* the house of God.

In *selPs* Origen clearly states his view that "the corporeal substance" will be "abolished".<sup>177</sup> Thus it is not unexpectedly affirmed that "incorporeal nature is the throne of Christ"<sup>178</sup> as it is incorporeality that exists beyond time whereas corporeal nature exists but for a definite period of time.

In *Cels* he speaks of "ways that have been appointed for the alterations of bodies, which [bodies] comprise the *world*, for *as long as it exists*".<sup>179</sup> So here he again refers to his notion that the world is a material reality which will exist but for a definite period of time. He further suggests the same conception as he speaks of "the day after the

making of the world which is the object of his activity *as long as* the world exists, the day of the sabbath and the cessation of God."<sup>180</sup> In the same work, it is quite indicative of his views that he speaks of "a certain fixed time when the world will be brought to the end, which it must necessarily have since it had a beginning."<sup>181</sup>

The very affirmation that the world will finally come to an end is actually implying the notion that corporeal nature will come to an end of existence. For the categories of "corporeality" and "world" are firmly connected in Origen's thought, so that one of them cannot make sense without the implication of the other, as we argued in chapter 1. This notion is also found in *selPs* where Origen states:

"For if the moon is abolished time is abolished, too; and once time is abolished the perceptible world will come to an end".<sup>182</sup>

What is significant in this passage is not only the implied conception of the end of the world; but also the view of time as "extended alongside with the structure of this world" is reiterated. What Origen actually says here is that space and time exist in close relation to each other and their end can be perceived only as *simultaneous*. Thus, in the passage above, one can discern this: In the first sentence, "abolition of space" (expressed as "moon") is stated as a *cause* for abolition of time. In the second sentence, "abolition of time" is a *cause* of abolition of space (expressed as "the perceptible world"). The succession of these two sentences denotes the notion of *simultaneity* of either existence or non-existence of space and time; that is, it indicates the existence or non-existence of space-time as *one* reality.

The passage above<sup>183</sup> seems to indicate a certain affinity between Origen's conception of time to that of Chrysippus who directly related time to the heavenly bodies. The fundamental difference, however, lies in Origen's different perceptions of what is

"material" and "temporal". Thus, although time is certainly related to the heavenly bodies, yet it is understood to exist in a "broader" world and not only to the perceptible one. This passage, nevertheless, is indicative of Origen's view of "place" on the one hand and rational beings as "inhabitants" of these places on the other. So, the reality space-time will come to an end and this end will be the final end regardless of whether or not there will be rational creatures in the particulars "spaces". So, although at the time of the "end" human beings may not exist at all (as they may have attained to higher ranks of life), their "space" (namely, the perceptible world) will exist and it is only at that time that it will be dissolved into nothing, together with the entire reality of space-time, of which this particular world is understood to be a part.

Accordingly, in *deOr*, Origen again relates the existence of time to that of heavenly bodies, as he states:

"And we have to consider if the words written of feasts or solemn assemblies that take place according to 'days' or 'months' or 'seasons' or 'years'<sup>184</sup> are to be referred to ages. For if 'the law' has 'a shadow of the things to come'<sup>185</sup> it must needs be that the many sabbaths are a 'shadow' of so many days and that the beginnings of months (τάς νομηνίας) come round in intervals of time (διὰ χρονικῶν διαστημάτων), and I know not under which moon accompanying which sun they [i.e. the beginnings of months] are determined (ἐνίστασθαι).<sup>186</sup>

This passage is quite indicative of Origen's conception of time. He is not interested in relating heavenly bodies to the very existence of time as an "extension" (διαστημάτων) in itself; but he regards the heavenly bodies as rather indicating the particular periods (days, months, years) of time and not establishing the very reality of time itself. This is a fundamental view of Origen and it is according to it that he regards the heavenly bodies as having been subjected to



"vanity", namely to carry out the task of indicating the various periods of time and the "kairoi" in which certain actions are taken by "angels" who "read the book of God", namely the heaven which indicates the appropriate times. Thus, heavenly bodies are certainly connected to time; yet *as heavenly bodies* do not in themselves establish the reality of time in itself but they just *indicate* the various periods of it. They are connected to *time itself* only in as much as they are understood as indicating the very reality of *space*. In respect of this, Origen's conception of time is essentially beyond that of Chrysippus. This is the basis on which Basil employed Origen's conception of time and attacked Eunomius assertions about time proper, as we saw in chapter 2.

Indeed, Origen holds a much more general conception of the close relation of time to space, particularly expressed as corporeality. In *fr. John* he states expresses his view that "mind" is subject to being in time due to the very fact that it has been "created"; and he further affirms that "mind" will be subject to being in time as long as (ὡς ὅσον χρόνον) "material life" exists, namely as long as corporeality exists.<sup>187</sup> Thus the existence of *time itself* is not understood to be essentially related to the existence of the heavenly bodies, but it is related to the category of *being created* and it is thus that the reality of time is held to pertain to the entire world and not only to the visible firmament.

As we mentioned previously, in Origen's thought the notions of "cyclicity" and "vanity" stand to a close relation. This conception mainly stems from considering the text of Paul in Rom.8,20-21, where he says that "The creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope, because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.". His view is that here "hope" means that the "sun and moon and stars and the angels of God should fulfil an

obedient service for the world; and it was for those souls which on account of their excessive spiritual defects required these grosser and more solid bodies and also for the sake of those others for whom this arrangement was necessary that the present visible world was instituted".<sup>188</sup>

Besides "cyclicity", the notion of "vanity" is also closely related to that of "corporeality". This is why Origen deems that "everything pertaining to corporeality is vanity" (τά σωματικά πάντα ματαιότης ἐστίν),<sup>189</sup> and "bodies themselves is vanity and to carry out actions pertaining to body is vanity" (ὥστε ματαιότης τὰ σώματα ἢ καί τό ποιεῖν τὰ σωματικά).<sup>190</sup> This is a main reason for Origen not to be particularly interested in the nature itself and to refer to it only secondarily.<sup>191</sup>

In this context, "hope" means the extinction of heavenly bodies, that is, the world's coming to an end. So he states:

"Nevertheless, the entire creation cherishes a hope of liberation, a hope of being 'delivered from the bondage of corruption'<sup>192</sup> when the 'children of God', who had both fallen and become scattered, have been gathered into one,<sup>193</sup> and when the others have fulfilled in this world the rest of their duties, which are known solely to God, the Artificer of all things".<sup>194</sup>

In Origen's view, especially stated in many points of *commJohn*, the movement of heavenly bodies certainly is not a "free" movement. Their "hope" in that case is that their "bodies" will at the end be abolished and thus this non-freedom will come to an end. This is supposed to happen when corporeal nature itself will be dissolved into non-being, namely at the end of the world. This is the sense in which the "end" constitutes their "hope".

As a matter of fact, the very notion that corporeality will come to an end of existence can directly be deducted by the very fact that the world will come to an end, in the sense discussed above. According

to the fundamental existential characteristics of the reality of the world, (that is the world as comprising space and time) "end" of the world automatically entails the "end" of corporeality as well as of time. There can be no other sense in which the entire resurrected "body" of Christ can be understood to come in union to the divine reality which is radically transcendent to both space and time.

To trace this conviction of Origen, namely that corporeality will at the final end be abolished, in the Latin translation of the *Princ* is not difficult in itself. However, since in that work the various meanings of "end" as a homonym have not been distinguished, there is a lot of confusion surrounding this notion. Rufinus has obviously tried to modify the text so that he might render a work with "orthodox" views or at least render a rather obscure text; yet he did so without being conscious of the slight (and yet very substantial and absolutely clear) nuances in the eschatological notions of Origen. On the other hand, there are the opponents; they are either people hostile to Origen himself or people much later than his era who were opposing Origenism rather than Origen himself; that is, they were opposing what was claimed to be Origen's thought -but a big question mark should be put on whether Origenism always expounded Origen's authentic views. In any case it is clear that the fundamental as well as subtle conceptual distinctions of Origen's eschatology eluded both sympathizers and opponents of his thought.

Thus, in the *Princ* one can see the notions of "end" mixed up, just because Rufinus is unaware that this term is a homonym. In the Second Book, there is a discussion about bodily nature and the destination of rational creatures. There is no need to discuss carelessness as in the use of the term "soul" being applied to all rational creatures although Origen himself, in his works in Greek, is always scrupulous in applying this term only to human beings and to

stress this fact. What is of importance here is that this discussion actually refers to the "form"<sup>195</sup> of the resurrected bodies. If this exposition is seen in the light of this conception of Origen, then one may discern much of his authentic views there. Most significantly, behind the Latin rendering, one could discern Origen himself stating that to speak of a "soul" being "clothed" in a body is but a "metaphor".<sup>196</sup> Furthermore, one can discern Origen's really anti-Platonic notion that rational creatures are understood to live *only* in bodies; this again underlines that in Origen's thought there is no room for notions of any actual "dualism" of spirit- matter or soul-body or any notion of "intelligible world", as rational creatures are regarded as actually inseparable entities living a corporeal life.

It is in the light of these convictions of Origen that paragraph 3 of this part of the *Princ* should be understood. The arguments adduced there that "in the end" corporeality will not "return to non-existence" actually pertains to just the "end" of an "aeon". The discussion is about those rational creatures being "saved" and transposed to "immortality"<sup>197</sup> which, as drawn from the works in Greek, actually means the status of being in the eternal life. Thus it is stated:

"It will be seen to be a necessity that, if bodily nature were to be destroyed, it must be restored and created a second time. For it is apparently possible that rational creatures, who are never deprived of the power of free will, may once again become subject to certain movements. This power is granted them by God lest, if they held their position for ever irremovably, they might forget that *they had been placed in the final state of blessedness by the grace of God and not by their own goodness*. These movements would again undoubtedly be followed by a *variety and diversity of bodies, out of which a world is always composed*; for it would never exist except as a result of variety and diversity, and this *can in no way be produced apart from*.

*bodily matter*."<sup>198</sup>

What Origen actually does here is to articulate his decisive opposition to Platonism. The "final state of blessedness" is the eternal life itself; and rational creatures attain to it by the grace of God, since their "will is not enough in order to attain to the end".<sup>199</sup> In the passage above it is reiterated that the status of eternal life is a corporeal one and also (which is directly related to the former notion) a reversible one, as discussed in chapter 4. Thus, to attain to eternal life does not, in Origen's view, entail that a rational creature lives an incorporeal life, for there is no notion of "a life apart from the body" and eternal life is *in* the "world" which "is always composed" of "a variety and diversity of bodies".<sup>200</sup>

In order that no doubt should remain as to which "end" (namely, the end of an aeon) Origen refers here, one should see how the work continues. The passage stated above is the conclusion of paragraph 3. Immediately after that Origen goes on with paragraph 4; and the subject discussed in that paragraph is Origen's view that the consecutive worlds are not "similar to each other and in all respects alike", namely to articulate his views of the non-recurrence of identical worlds. So, it is also from the course itself of Origen's exposition that one may see what the discussion of the previous paragraph of the work was actually about. No matter what the interventions of Rufinus in the text may be, the logical sequence of Origen's exposition is still there and no intervention can extinguish it. The chapter at hand is about "the beginning of the world and its causes",<sup>201</sup> he makes an introduction in what he is going to discuss in this chapter. The §1 begins thus: "It remains to enquire next, whether there was another world before the one which now exists."<sup>202</sup> Then (in §2) he portrays the teleological character of the course of the present world and the meaning of the resurrection as a hope to be realized at

the end of this aeon for those who deserve it. Then (§3) he insists that those who will be saved will live in bodies, too. Next (§4) he rejects the doctrine of recurrence of identical worlds. It is only at the end of the chapter (§7) that there is a reference to the "end and perfection of all things".<sup>203</sup> In the course of this exposition (§6) Origen did not fail to explicate that "it is certainly foreign to our mode of reasoning to speak of an incorporeal world that exists only in the minds fancy"; and, as he himself points out, this remark constitutes his attitude towards the notion of "the existence of certain imaginary forms which the Greeks call 'ideas'".<sup>204</sup>

Hence not only the text itself, but also the study of its context, namely the logical course in which Origen expounds his thought, clearly show that the "end" which he refers to is the end of the aeon -not the perfection of all; least of all, the final end.

It is in the light of this discussion that one should see how unreasonably Koetschau has incorporated the so-called Fragment 19 in this section of the *Princ.* Justinian speaks of when "what has been subjected to Christ shall in the end be subjected also to God" and "then all will lay aside their bodies;"<sup>205</sup> It is obvious that Koetschau has not grasped what the discussion in that paragraph is about, and quite falsely has regarded this passage as relevant to the views expounded there. On the other hand, Justinian, too, has not grasped Origen's authentic views; for his passage (attributing views to Origen) continues thus: "and I think that there will then be a dissolution of bodily nature into non-existence, to come into existence a second time if rational beings should again fall.".<sup>206</sup>

It is only the notion of dissolution of bodily nature that echoes Origen's authentic views here. Yet, even so, it is certain that Justinian only accidentally includes this phrase here; for there is no doubt that he had totally miscomprehended what Origen really held. In chapter 2

we argued that Origen holds no notion of corporeality coming into existence "for a second time" as he does not hold any notion of timeless causality which Justinian falsely attributes to him. Beyond that, however, Justinian attributes this view to Origen in the context of his false impression that Origen held some notion of a beginningless world of incorporeal rational beings. This is what he actually means when he speaks of "rational beings" which would "again fall" and certainly he has attributed this view to Origen in other passages of the same work of his.<sup>207</sup> Thus, when he speaks of "end" and "dissolution of bodily nature" it is only in letter that he echoes Origen's views. Justinian himself was not only unaware of what Origen really held but even he had a false knowledge of that. For it is obvious that Justinian does not regard this "end" as *the absolute end of the world*; he rather regards it as a transformation of a beginningless and endless world, from a corporeal to an incorporeal form. Besides, this "end" of corporeality is regarded, as it were, as a "temporary" one, as corporeal nature may well come into existence again according to an assumed "causality" accompanying an "eternal" and essentially incorporeal world. In view of our previous discussions in this work it would be superfluous to discuss here how these allegations of Justinian are far from Origen's authentic thought.

For similar reasons, namely failure to grasp the different conceptions of "end", Jerome also attributes false opinions to Origen. He alleges that, according to Origen, "he who is perfectly subjected to Christ must be understood to be without a body, and all are to be subjected to Christ, then we too shall exist without bodies, when we have become perfectly subjected to him." What Jerome has not grasped here is that subjection to Christ is a corporeal status and this is not what is perceived as the final end. Besides, the expression "to live without bodies" would never have been used by Origen, for to him "life" of creatures is inseparable from the notion of corporeality; thus the

very expression "to live without bodies" is in itself a self-contradictory one, exactly in the same way that it could be absurd to speak of any "incorporeal world".

Accordingly, Jerome alleges that to Origen "...all things have lived without bodies, then bodily existence will be swallowed up, and that which was once created out of nothing will be resolved into nothing. And a time will come when its use will once again be necessary."<sup>208</sup>

The last point is similar to Justinian's allegations as discussed above. What is of interest, however, is that Jerome, in a way, admits that Origen did not hold any notion of "eternity" of the world or, at least, any notion of its beginninglessness. This is exactly opposite to Justinian's allegations.

The expression "out of nothing ... into nothing", however, is far too simplistic and actually distorts Origen's views. What is "out of nothing ... into nothing" is the world as a "katabole" (καταβολή) namely as a fallen state, as a symptom of the existence of evil. Origen's perception of Creation, however, actually "out of God ... into God". The first part of this notion alludes to the conception of the "fall" whereas the second alludes to that of "resurrection". As he regarded both of them as "mysteries" and secret truths which are difficult to be speculated, he consciously avoided to speak much of them. It is then not surprising that this is exactly where many of his opponents selected the ground for distorting his authentic views.

In the light of the discussion above, we can now consider certain assertions of Jerome on Origen's eschatological ideas and particularly those about corporeal nature.

"And further, when the same apostle says that 'the whole creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the son's of God', we understand it in such a way



as to say that the first creation of rational creatures was also an incorporeal one, which was not meant to be in bondage to corruption for the reason that it was not clothed with bodies; for whenever bodies are, corruption follows immediately. But it will afterwards be 'delivered from the bondage of corruption', when it has received the glory of the Son of God and when 'God shall be all in all'.<sup>209</sup>

We are also led to believe that the end of all things will be incorporeal by the statement of our Saviour, in which he says, 'That as I and thou are one, so they also may be one in us'.<sup>210</sup> For we ought to know what God is and what the Saviour will be in the end, and how the likeness of the Father and the Son has been promised to the saints, so that as the Father and the Son are one in themselves, so, too, the saints may be one in them. For we must either suppose that the God of the universe is clothed with a body and enveloped with some sort of matter in the same way as we are with flesh, in order that the likeness of God's life may in the end be brought to the level of the saints; or, if this view is unseemly, as it most certainly is to those who desire even in the smallest degree to dwell on the majesty of God and to apprehend the glory of his unbegotten and all-surpassing nature, then we are compelled to accept one of two alternatives and either despair of ever attaining the likeness of God if we are destined always to have bodies, or else, if there is promised to us a blessedness of the same life that God has, then we must live in the same condition in which God lives.<sup>211</sup>

To trace Origen's views in this passage (which the translator G. Butterworth, regard as "filling" the "gaps left by Rufinus") is not an easy task. For here one is faced with the phenomenon always appearing in the allegations about Origen's thought: There are seeds of authentic views of Origen yet mingled with arbitrary assertions or offered with some crucial facets of them missing so that they actually are quasi-truths; and these quasi-truths constitute the worst distortion of

Origen's authentic views.

First, however, we can discern in that passage Origen's opinion that corporeality will come to an end.

Indeed Origen refers to a state of an absolute non-existence of the world, not only in the past but also in the future. In the *Princ* it is stated that "if there will ever be a time when there will be no world anywhere, or if there ever was a time when there was any world at all",<sup>212</sup> also, in the same work, he refers to "when the universe reaches its perfect end". At that point he comments on the scriptural passages "I will that, where I am, these also may be there with me"<sup>213</sup> and "as I and you are one, that they also may be one in us",<sup>214</sup> and regards those sayings as alluding to a reality that "all things are no longer in an age, but 'God is all in all'".<sup>215</sup>

This passage is not extant in the Greek original text; but we have no reason not to accept that the term "age" (saeculum) used here is Rufinus' rendering of the term "aeon" which exactly is used by Origen in order to denote the reality of the world. Therefore the notion of not to live in an "age" is denoting the notion of not to live in the "world", namely in a spatio-temporal reality.

On the other hand, it is obvious that Rufinus has tried to not state explicitly Origen's view that corporeality will finally come to an end. Thus he offers a particularly obscure rendering of the relevant points with ambiguities studiously left under phrases like this; "So far, then, we have discussed the question of our bodily nature and of the spiritual body. We leave it to the reader's judgement to choose which of the two opinions he decides to be the better."<sup>216</sup> At another point he speaks of the "end of all things"<sup>217</sup> and offers three different possibilities for what the "end" will be, stating: "Each of our readers must judge for himself, with all care and diligence, whether one of them may be approved and adopted."<sup>218</sup> Thus he goes on with

articulating three possible "ends" (...either ... or ... or else ...). In that text the conceptions of the final perfection of all rational creatures and that of the final end have been mingled together and therefore there is a lot of confusion. For the former "end" is one in which corporeal nature still exists whereas the latter, namely the absolute end, marks the end of corporeality. This failure to grasp the different notions of the end as well as the concern of Rufinus about what was regarded as "orthodoxy" lead him to leave the conceptions unclear and to leave the reader to "judge for himself".<sup>219</sup>

It is from the same work, however, that one might deduct that corporeality will finally cease to exist. Origen holds that "the end and the consummation of all things should consist of a return to this beginning"<sup>220</sup> and, in general, his conviction is that the "end" will be like the "beginning". This notion stands, in the same work, side by side with statements such as "bodily nature was created out of nothing after a space of time and brought into being from non-existence",<sup>221</sup> and "bodily nature ... did not exist before it was made".<sup>222</sup>

In the same work there are statements of the "end which is renewed after the pattern of the origin and the issue of things made to resemble their beginning",<sup>223</sup> and further: "But some think that this perfection and blessedness of rational natures can only remain in the condition which we have described above, that is the condition in which all things possess God and God is all things to them, if they are in no way impeded by union with a bodily nature. Otherwise, if there were any intermingling of a material substance, they consider that the glory of the highest blessedness would be prevented. On this subject the arguments that may be raised have been fully dealt with and discussed by us in a previous chapter."<sup>224</sup>

There should be no doubt that the last phrase is of Rufinus who does not wish to deal with the question of corporeality again. The

"previous chapter" of which he speaks is the passage in Book II, chapter 3, §2,3. But, as we discussed in the previous pages, the question which is actually enquired at that point is the corporeal nature of rational creatures at the end of the aeon; and obviously this has not much to do with the question of corporeality at the final end.

Here it is apparent again that Rufinus has not grasped the distinction between the different meanings of "end". Thus he just poses the question stating what "some think", without stating that the opinion of these "some" is the opinion of Origen himself at this point of *Princ*. This is the way in which, we think, Rufinus has modified the passage in this point in his effort to avoid a further discussion of this question which he obviously regarded as a tricky one.

Regarding the passage of Paul in Rom. 8,20-21 according to which the entire creation cherishes a hope of liberty, a hope of being "delivered from the bondage of corruption", together with the saying "The fashion of this world passes away"<sup>225</sup> Origen develops the following syllogism in order to ground his view that these sayings point both to a "beginning" and an "end" of the world:

"If the creation was subjected to vanity by reason of a certain hope, it was certainly so subjected from a cause, and *what proceeds from a cause must necessarily have a beginning*; since apart from some beginning the creation could not have been subjected to vanity nor could it hope to be 'delivered from the bondage of corruption' if it had never *begun* to be a servant to corruption."; therefore "the world both had a beginning and is expecting an end".<sup>226</sup>

It is further argued that when Christ says that "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" "he shows that it is corruptible and destined to come to an end".<sup>227</sup>

This notion is explicated in *Princ* already since the beginning of the work, namely in the Preface: "The Church teaching also includes

the doctrine that this world was made and began to exist at a definite time and that by reason of its corruptible nature it must suffer dissolution. But what existed before this world, or what will exist after it, has not yet been made known openly to the many, for no clear statement on the point is set forth in the Church teaching."<sup>228</sup>

In the light of Origen's works in Greek, the relevant affirmations in *Princ* about the world expecting an "end" may be regarded as expressing Origen's thought authentically. What is a delicate question, however, is Origen's views on what is above stated as "before this world, or ... after it.". This topic will be discussed later in this chapter.

Regarding the passage in Gen. 49,1 "Gather to me, ye sons of Jacob, that I may tell you what shall be in the last days" as well as the expression "after the last days", he points that "If then there are 'last days' or a time 'after the last days', it follows of necessity that the days which had a beginning also come to an end."<sup>229</sup> He further appeals to other scriptural passages in order to conclude that the world "is corruptible and destined to come to an end".<sup>230</sup>

We conclude, therefore, that among Jerome's allegations about Origen's thought it is only his testimony that corporeality is held to finally come to an end that actually expresses Origen's authentic views.

On the other hand, however, it is inaccurate to attribute to Origen an opinion such as "the first creation of rational creatures was an incorporeal one", as Jerome does in the above mentioned passage. For such an assertion actually implies the creation of a "world" of individual incorporeal creatures<sup>231</sup> -a notion far too alien to Origen's authentic views.<sup>232</sup>

In chapter 1 we have undertaken a certain approach to Origen's views on this topic. In *Dial* he makes an introduction of more than two pages before uttering a few words about this question. In those

preliminary remarks he repeatedly expresses his "anguish" as he was about to speak of these "highly delicate notions";<sup>233</sup> he regards this question a "mystical"<sup>234</sup> truth; and, finally, after a long introduction in which he expresses his anguish because of the slippery ground on which he was about to walk, he indeed speaks of "man" as in himself being "two men" of which one is "incorporeal" and was "formerly" made alluding to his conception of the wisdom of God, as discussed in chapter 1. But if Origen held what Jerome claims he held, he would simply and purely expound his views on this subject without long introductions in which he expressed his "anguish" because of what he was going to talk about. Certainly neither Plato nor Plotinus, nor anyone else who held the Platonic views, had any difficulty in enunciating them simply and clearly; neither did they feel any "anguish" intending to speak about them. Origen feels so, however, just because he is far from holding any simplistic view of an "incorporeal world" existing before the corporeal one; he holds a different perception of world's coming into being yet he regards this truth is a mystical one which needs "listeners who have a mind able to apprehend the truth plainly".<sup>235</sup>

Certainly Jerome was not one of them -to say the least. For he was not able to apprehend that what Origen refers to is not any incorporeal world but God's wisdom herself. He did not apprehend that, in Origen's view, the end of things will be incorporeal, not because there will be any "change" of the form in which the world exists but because the entire resurrected "body" of Christ will "enter" into the divine being and this "body" will then be the Wisdom of God and not "world" any more. This is the sense in which Origen affirms that the end will mark the termination of the existence of corporeal nature. This is the reality indicated under figures such as that at the "end of things ... God is said not only to be in all things but even to be all things" and "the mind will no longer be conscious of anything besides or

other than God".<sup>236</sup> However awkward Rufinus' translation may be at that point, in the light of our previous analyses one can discern Origen's authentic views behind these figures of speech.

This is the sense in which Origen holds that the "end" is the same as the "beginning",<sup>237</sup> and affirmations such as "the beginning or the end of all things could not be comprehended by any except our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit"<sup>238</sup> should be understood in the light of this perception of the end.

It is quite characteristic of this perception that Origen speaks of the "beginning *or* the end".

What he means by "restoration" is the return to that original state. In *homJer* he makes an analysis of the term "to restore" (ἀποκαθιστώ)<sup>239</sup> and he regards a certain "mystery" denoted by the saying in Jeremiah, 15,19 "Therefore thus said the Lord; If you return I will restore you (Διὰ τοῦτο τάδε ῥέχει Κύριος· εἰ ἐπιστρέψῃς, καὶ ἀποκαταστήσω σε)".<sup>240</sup> This is the "mystery" of the final resurrection and return to God.

Therefore, this return is exactly the return to the state where the only reality is the divine one; a reality where "there will no longer be any contrast between good and evil, since evil nowhere exists; for God, whom evil never approaches, is then all things".<sup>241</sup>

This restoration is described by Origen as the "day of God"<sup>242</sup> when the "blessedness" will be attained to; it is also as "day of God" that he portrays the notion of the eschatological "sabbath" of those who will attain to it "the day after the making of the world which is the object of his activity as long as the world exists, the day of the sabbath and the cessation of God, in which those who have done all their works in the six days will feast together with God;".<sup>243</sup>

This end marks the return to the state "before" the actual creation of the world. In that reality Christ "was not in need of

rooting-out words, when he was 'in the Father', he was not in need of words digging-down and demolishing the worse; for there was nothing which had to be dug down, there was nothing which had to be rooted out".<sup>244</sup>

To "enter" into the divine reality does not allude to all becoming "sons" of God, but to all becoming *son* of God. For it will be the state as before the fall. The distinction drawn between "sons" and "son" is very substantial as it is indicative of how Origen perceives the reality in which there is no world at all. As already mentioned, the concept of the "fall" is held by Origen to be a "mystical" doctrine. It is because the "end" is understood as a "return" to the primeval state that Origen regards also the concept of "resurrection" as a "mystery great and difficult to contemplate"<sup>245</sup> and as a doctrine comprehended only by "the wise".<sup>246</sup> He, nevertheless, provides some substantial indications of how he comprehends this "end". Thus, in *comm. John* he states that the "end" is "the so-called restoration (καί τό τέλος αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ ἀεχομένῃ ἀνοκαταστάσει), because at that time there will be no enemy left, if it is true the [saying] 'he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet; and the last enemy will be destroyed, namely death'.<sup>247</sup> For then there will be one action by those who reached near (πρός) to God ... so that they *all become* ... exactly *son (υἱός)*, as now only the son knows the Father." And this will happen "when they become one as the son and the Father are one (ἀλλ' ὅταν γένωνται ἐν ὧς ὁ υἱός καί ὁ πατήρ ἐν εἰσίν)".<sup>248</sup>

This passage provides the light, in which certain crucial affirmations of Origen should be understood. When he speaks about the son stating that "it is only the son who knows him, as he is comprehended by the Father and he comprehends the Father."<sup>249</sup> he contrast this knowledge from that of creatures because they are spatio-temporal beings. This is why he says that "mind" cannot see God



now, because mind is "created" and therefore "subject to time and corporeality".

However, he avers that "at the *end of things* (ἐνί δέ τῷ τέλει τῶν πραγμάτων) and at the "*restoration* (ἀνοκαταστάσεως) of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began' (Acts, 3, 21) we shall see him not like now, that He does not seem as he actually is, but as it is appropriate to that time, which *he is*".<sup>250</sup>

This means that at the final end God will be seen in Himself, as the son knows Him. The explanation for Origen holding such a serious notion lies exactly in the fact that all will have become *son* -not sons. Therefore, it is not a question of a personal "mind" which just will get rid of corporeality and will see God Himself. Such a Platonic notion is entirely alien to Origen's thought. The notion of all becoming *son* (and not sons) directly stems from his conception of the resurrected "body" of Christ and will be discussed later in this chapter as an outstanding perception which par excellence underlines the non-individualistic character of his conception of resurrection.

It is in a similar way that this notion is described in the Latin translation of the *Princ*:

"When events have begun to hasten towards the ideal of all being one as the Father is one with the Son,<sup>251</sup> we are bound to believe as a logical consequence that where all are one there will no longer be any diversity."<sup>252</sup>

This is the sense in which the "beginning or end" is stated to be incomprehensible and Origen explicitly states this view in the *Princ*:

"Moreover Isaiah, knowing that the beginnings of things could not be discovered by mortal nature, no, and not even by those natures which, though diviner than man's nature, are yet themselves made and created, knowing, I say, that none of these could discover either the

beginning *or* the end says; 'Tell ye the former things, what they were, and we shall know that ye are gods; or declare the last things, what they are, and then shall we see that ye are gods.'<sup>253</sup> ... neither the armies of the holy angels, nor the holy thrones, nor the dominions, nor principalities, nor powers can wholly know the beginnings of all things and the ends of the universe."<sup>254</sup>

Whenever Origen speaks of being *in* the world (even of the eternal life), or of the world itself, he always uses a phraseology implicitly or explicitly denoting that the world is *out* of God. In the passage above he speaks alludes to the eternal life speaking of the "end" as a "subjection" of all to Christ, speaking of "all" (πάντες) those who reached "*near*" (πρός) to God" but he does not portray this state as *in* God; besides, he does not fail to point out that this is an active state as he speaks of "action" (πράξις) of all those who reached "near" to God.<sup>255</sup>

By contrast, when he speaks of the reality either "before" the fall or "after" the end, he uses a language clearly denoting that this is a state *in* God. He who "fell" was "*in* godhead" (έν θεότητι),<sup>256</sup> and God "will receive (or, gather together; συνάχοντος) all to one end".<sup>257</sup> Thus the purpose of striving in time is entering into the divine reality. It is God who constitutes the content of hope and expectation, as Origen affirms that "I look forward to God and it is *himself* who is my *expectation* and *hope*" (ἀλλὰ πρὸς αὐτόν βλέπω τόν Θεόν, αὐτόν ἔχων προσδοκίαν καί ἐλπίδα).<sup>258</sup>

With respect to this, the following passage is quite eloquent:

"Certainly the soul of Christ, living in its own perfection, was *in* God and the fulness of divine life (έν Θεώ καί τώ πληρώματι); it *came out* of there (ἐκείθεν ἐξεληλυθυία) being sent by the Father and assumed the body from Mary. But other souls *came out* (ἐξήλθον) of God not in this way, namely they *came out* being neither sent nor escorted by the divine will."<sup>259</sup>

So what is *in the world* is understood to be *out of God* and vice versa.<sup>260</sup> It should be noted, however, that this notion of "out" does not imply that God is a certain "whole", "out" of which the world exists. The notion of "out" is simply a figure<sup>261</sup> through which Origen portrays the radical transcendence of God. For, as we discuss further in this chapter, Origen enunciates that God is neither a "part" nor a "whole". As the term "whole" applies to the world, God is actually beyond the whole. At any rate, Origen stresses that the scriptural figures (such as "in-out" or "up-down") which he employs in order to depict the relation of God to the world (namely the radical hiatus between divine reality and the world) certainly have not any *spatial* significance whatever. They are figures which allude only to the *qualitative* difference of the "immaterial and invisible and incorporeal" divine reality from the world which is all "material and has various spaces".<sup>262</sup>

At this point it is worth while recalling Origen's analyses about the world, which came into being out of non-being because God *willed* so. Indeed, in chapter 1, the notion of the *will* of God and the creation as an outcome of God's freedom has been extensively discussed.

What we see here is that Origen regards the world as the "whole" which is portrayed as the absolutely *out* of God. Thus the world is but an *out* of God and yet it came into being by God's *will*.<sup>263</sup>

It is extremely striking that G. Florovski makes exactly this exposition of the Christian view of creation, particularly emphasizing the notions of God's *will* as well as the perception of the world as being *out* of God. However he attributes those views to Athanasius.<sup>264</sup> That he did not know the views of Origen should be not a matter of particular importance. The fact is, however, that he makes these assertions in a work which is supposed to portray a radical contrast between Origen's and Athanasius' views of creation. The first half of his work is an exposition of views allegedly those of Origen and drawn

from certain passages of the Latin rendering of the *Princ.* The second half is supposed to expound the views of Athanasius which are allegedly the counterpoint of those of Origen's.

So, after he has expounded what he regards as views of Athanasius', he concludes by stating that the notion of the world as created by the *will* of God (namely, the distinction between the "will" and the "essence"<sup>265</sup> of God) as well as the notion that the world is the *out* of God and is directed towards an *end*, not only constitute views established by Athanasius but they are also "a step beyond Origen"! This is the main point and the main conclusion of that work. What he thinks is that those views were articulated "for the first time" by Athanasius in the climax of the Arian controversy.

We leave for the reader to judge whether these views of G. Florovski constitute an irony or a tragedy.

#### **§4. The raison d'être of Time**

In the light of this analysis it is now possible to see the deeper meaning of an affirmation of Origen in *Cels.* In the last section of the Fourth Book a careful reader may discern that a main issue in the dispute is the so-called eternity of the world. Generally in this work Origen articulates his own views and arguments using Celsus' own words to the largest possible extent.<sup>266</sup> This is what Origen does in this section as well.

Celsus' view as articulated by Origen in the beginning of the section is that *God does not return to himself through time* (οὐδέ διὰ χρόνου πρὸς αὐτόν ὁ θεὸς ἐπιστρέφει).<sup>267</sup> This is a current Greek view according to which the world has neither beginning nor end and creation out of nothing is a generally accepted view among various Greek schools of thought. Even Plato, who spoke of a beginning of time,<sup>268</sup> did stick to the general tradition of his time. The Demiurge did not create

*ex nihilo* but he put in order a pre-existing matter.<sup>269</sup>

At that point, too, Origen articulates his own view using Celsus' words and simply denying Celsus' negation; so, as two negations make one affirmation, he states:

"But God cares not only of *the whole* (τοῦ ὅλου), as Celsus thinks, but he par excellence takes particular care of every rational being. And there will be no time when providence will have abandoned the world. For even if some part of it becomes very bad because the rational being sins, his providence is (οικονομεῖ) to purify it and *through time the whole to return to Himself*" (καί διὰ χρόνου τό ὅλον επιστρέφειν πρὸς εαυτόν).<sup>270</sup>

This passage is of particular significance. For it is here that two different conceptions of time confront each other. It is the *teleological* conception of time and its *dramatic* character that here Origen argues for.

In contrast to Celsus who denies any notion of return of God to himself "through time" (διὰ χρόνου), Origen extends his conviction which indeed constitutes his view of the *raison d'être* of time. Time is not just an indifferent natural element but it is a creature existing due to the divine dispensation (οικονομία) is that "through" which what is *out* of God will return to become *in* God.<sup>271</sup> Meanwhile though, namely until the world reaches this "end", time is where the dialectical relation between the will of God and that of rational creatures takes place.

It should also be noted that the term *whole* (τοῦ ὅλου) refers to the world itself.<sup>272</sup> To portray the world as the "whole" (τό ὅλον) is a Stoic expression.<sup>273</sup> Origen, however, rejects the Stoic doctrine that God is immanent in the world, as we have seen.<sup>274</sup> He also explicitly opposes both "the Stoics and the followers of Plato" who held that the "whole" world is "god".<sup>275</sup> His view is that God is neither "part" nor "whole" and this also is one of the articulations that underline the

radical transcendence of God. At a point of the same work the relation of God to the world is portrayed thus:

"All things are parts of the world yet God is not part of the whole (πάντα γάρ μέρη κόσμου, ουδέν δέ μέρος ὅλου ὁ Θεός); for God must be regarded as not incomplete as the part is incomplete. And probably a deeper inquiry could show that strictly speaking, just as God is not a part, so also he is not the whole (Θεός ὡςπερ οὐκ ἔστι μέρος οὕτως ουδέ ὅλον), since the whole is made up of parts (ἐπεὶ τό ὅλον ἐκ μερῶν ἔστι).<sup>276</sup> And reason does not demand that we should accept the view that the supreme God is made up of parts, each one of which cannot do what the other parts can."<sup>277</sup>

Thus, in Origen's reply to Celsus the term "whole" means the world itself. The notion of "returning" to God constitutes a return to a reality which is *beyond* the whole. In the same passage, the expression *διὰ χρόνου* which we translated as "through time" may also mean "after a time",<sup>278</sup> which also implies the conception that time in itself is finite, namely has a beginning and will come to an end.<sup>279</sup> It is interesting, however, that it is Origen himself who, in other parts of his work, enunciates how he comprehends the real meaning of the preposition *διὰ* (through). Thus he holds that this preposition denotes the notion of "to minister to" or "to serve to" (ἢ *διὰ* πρόθεσις τό υπηρετικόν ἐμφάνει).<sup>280</sup>

This is how Origen perceives the deeper significance of the existence of time, as well as that of the entire world, in general: It came into being in order to "serve" rational creatures, namely to render their freedom meaningful. Time exists for the sake of rational creatures so that they strive for their return to God from whom they have fallen.

The deeper perception of the eschatological perspectives of the world, as expounded in the above-mentioned reply to Celsus, is also

very vividly expressed in a very eloquent passage in *commJohn*. It is there that the notion of to-come-out-of-God is related to the eschatological perspective of restoration as established by the incarnation of Christ.

Indeed it is most characteristic of Origen's perception of both the fall and the resurrection that he speaks of Jesus as his who "*came out of God*"<sup>281</sup> for the sake of *those who had come out of God*" (διὰ τὰ ἐξεληθόντα δέ ἀπό τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐξήλθεν ἀπό τοῦ Θεοῦ); "*whereas before he willed not to go out of the father, he went out of God, so that those who went out [of God] come in the hands of Jesus in due time and order and so that the dispensation of their going to God by following Jesus be realized; for they will be with God as a result of their following him (sc. Jesus)*".<sup>282</sup>

It is exactly through the expression *in due time and order* (οὐδὴ καὶ τάξει) that the deeper reason for the existence of time is suggested. In fact, what follows these affirmations of Origen's is his exegesis that the saying of Jesus to Peter "Whither I go you cannot follow me now; but you shall follow me afterwards"<sup>283</sup> will be said "to each one of all which the father gave in the hands of the son" (πρὸς ἕκαστον τῶν πάντων ὃ δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ ὁ πατήρ εἰς τὰ χεῖρας), namely to all rational creatures; yet it will not be said to all at the same time (ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν) and this is the meaning of the scriptural expression "afterwards".<sup>284</sup> Accordingly he comments on the saying "Whither I go, you cannot come"<sup>285</sup> affirming that although it is *now* not possible to go where Jesus went it will be possible in the future, as there is the "present aeon"<sup>286</sup> and an "aeon to come" as well as "the aeons to come".<sup>287</sup>

The same notion, namely the conception of time as an extension through which rational creatures will return to God, is found in a passage in *commJohn*, which is of utmost significance. Yet it has to be

treated carefully because its syntax demands a careful analysis and in certain translations it has been misinterpreted. The passage in the original text reads as follows:

"Τά μέντοι γε τῆς ετοιμασίας τῶν λίθων αἰρομένων καί  
ευτρεπιζομένων εἰς τήν οἰκοδομήν, τρισίν ἔτεσιν ἐπιτελούμενα, ἐμφαίνειν  
μοι δοκεῖ τοῦ ἐν αἰωνίῳ τῇ τριάδι συγγενούς διαστήματος τόν ὅλον  
χρόνον."<sup>288</sup>

This is a passage in the section where Origen comments on John, 2, 21ff, about the "temple" of the body of Jesus. It is here that he expounds his views of the resurrection<sup>289</sup> and through the figure of the "restoration" of the temple he alludes to the eschatological reality of the resurrection.

In order to put the words in the passage above in their proper sequence, and thus to see its exact meaning, one has to take into full account Origen's fundamental conception of time as well as the meaning of terms being used both here and in phrases both immediately before and after this text. Thus the real order of the last (and crucial) phrase is this: "... δοκεῖ μοι ἐμφαίνειν τόν ὅλον χρόνον τοῦ διαστήματος συγγενούς τοῦ [γενέσθαι] ἐν τῇ αἰωνίῳ τριάδι."; and the translation of the whole passage is this:

"The expressions referring to the preparation of the stones which are raised up and prepared in order to construct the building (sc. the temple of Solomon) certainly seem to me to signify the whole of time, namely the temporal extension which is demanded in order to move into the eternal Trinity".<sup>290</sup>

In this passage Origen consciously avoids to use any verb which could indicate this "moving" into the Trinity. We have put the verb "to move" for the purpose of clarity yet in the Greek text there is no verb at all. Indeed at this point Origen uses his language in a superb way. For what he denotes is only the *direction* in time, namely the movement in



time having as goal and end the "entering" into the divine being. In fact, however, there is no predication whatsoever referred to the existential status "after" (so to speak) this "entering" into the divine being. If Origen explicitly used the terms "moving" or "being" then one might assert that what happens at the absolute end is that rational beings *exist as such namely*, as personal individual incorporeal creatures into the divine being. But this would entail that in that existential status rational beings may live as incorporeal individual personalities -which is far too alien to what Origen really held. As a matter of fact, there is no verb which might be used in this case and this is why Origen repeatedly states that the doctrine of resurrection is "great" and "difficult to contemplate".

What he actually refers to at this point is the "perfection of resurrection", as discussed in the previous pages. It is quite indicative of his conception that this passage is immediately followed by an affirmation referring to "when" this "entering" into the divine being will occur. He states that "these will happen when peace will be absolute after the years of dispensation following the exodus from Egypt..." (ταῦτα δέ ἐσται ὅταν ἡ εἰρήνη τελεσθῇ μετὰ ἔτη τῆς οἰκονομίας τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀν' Αἰγύπτου ἐξόδου...).<sup>291</sup> At this point we should recall that it is in figures of "absolute peace" that Origen portrays the reality of the final abolition of evil. Here he uses the same terms in order to portray the same eschatological reality. Further on he uses the same expression.<sup>292</sup>

Thus the real meaning of this passage is elucidated not only by pondering upon this passage itself but also by the study of the terms which are used both in this passage and immediately before and after it, namely the whole context of this passage as well as the conceptual context of Origen's thought as found in other works of his.

Beyond that, nevertheless, there is the aspect of the actual

content of the passage. Any structure which would lead to an interpretation that there is time in the divine being, would be not only arbitrary but also false both on grounds of philology and Origen's authentic views.<sup>293</sup> For the term συγγενούς can in no way be applied to the expression ἐν αἰωνίῳ τῇ τριάδι just because there is the preposition ἐν. In order to be able to speak of a time applied to the eternal Trinity, the phrase should be συγγενούς τῇ αἰωνίῳ τριάδι. That is, the preposition ἐν should not exist at all and the term συγγενούς to be related to a Dative form. But in this case the preposition ἐν does exist and Origen himself gives a sample (at a point shortly above this passage) of how he uses and understands the term συγγενούς, namely that here it goes with Genitive and it means "related to". Therefore, that the term συγγενούς does not apply to the phrase ἐν αἰωνίῳ τῇ τριάδι is not actually a matter of structural contingency or exegetical choice. If this relation of the two expressions were employed, it would simply and purely be a mistake both on grounds of grammar and structure of the Greek language which subsequently would lead to distortions of Origen's thought, namely to the notion that the divine reality is a temporal one.

But it is in the same work that Origen explicitly states his views that no notion of time can be applied to the divine being whatsoever, as we have discussed in chapter 1. It is not possible, therefore, to explain this passage in a way directly opposite to the fundamental conceptions of Origen's enunciated in the same work.

The conclusion of the discussion concerning this passage is that here Origen clearly denotes some facets of his conception of time itself as well of his eschatology. Indeed, speaking of "the whole time" he indicates that time is finite and it is also an "extension" as the very term διάστημα (extension) is being used here. Beyond that, however, what is significant for our subject here is that *time is the extensor*.

*though which all rational beings are "prepared" in order to enter into the divine being.* It is in the light of this conception that Origen employs the allegory of the whole of time portrayed by the figure of "three days"; as he explains, in the same part of this work, the "first" day is a figure of the duration of existence of evil, the "second" alludes to the consummation of the world and the "third" is the day of the resurrection of the entire world.<sup>294</sup>

It is remarkable that, in both the reply to Celsus and in *commJohn*,<sup>295</sup> Origen explicitly relates the notion of "return" to God with the notion of "dispensation" (οικονομία). Also, in both cases he clearly states that this "dispensation" (οικονομία) will take place "through time" (διὰ χρόνου) and indeed "in due course and order" (οὕτως καὶ τάξει). Time is a means for the divine "dispensation" to be realized and for creaturely freedom to make sense and be exercised. Thus time, as an element of the make-up of the world established by God, is exactly what par excellence shows that divine dispensation does not oppress freedom; for it is due to the very reality of time itself that creaturely freedom acquires an actual meaning.

Hence, from the previous analyses it becomes obvious that those rational beings which attain to the eternal life have a twofold hope and expectation. The fulfilment of their hope to through Christ "jump" onto the timeless divine reality has an indispensable pre-requisite; this is that all rational creatures will have attained to the eternal life. The "perfection of the resurrection",<sup>296</sup> namely the "entering" into the divine reality through Christ (who, to them, is the "gate") will not take place unless all "enemies" will have been "subjected" to Christ and the "last enemy", namely "death", will have been "abolished".

This means that the "end" will occur through time and "this subjection will be accomplished through certain means and courses of discipline and periods of time";<sup>297</sup> In *commJohn*, Origen expounds his

views through an entirely scriptural language, as he states:

"Since it is through Christ that God reconciles the world to himself<sup>298</sup> as it (sc. the world) previously had been an enemy due to the existence of evil in it, he is a benefactor to the whole world; yet, to those who receive the benefaction, he is a benefactor through a certain course and order (οδῶ καί τάξει), as he does not put all the enemies as a footstool under the feet<sup>299</sup> all at once (οὐκ ἀθρόως). For the Father says to the Lord of each one of us; 'Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies a footstool under your feet.' (Ps.109,1). And all the occurrences happen until the last enemy, namely death, will be abolished by him.<sup>300</sup> Whatever the subjection to Christ is, if we are to understand it mainly as in the [saying] 'And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him',<sup>301</sup> then we shall duly to his goodness comprehend how the lamb of God bears and takes away the sin of the world."<sup>302</sup>

So, although Origen holds a notion of an "end" as personal perspective of an individual rational creature, his conception of "resurrection" has not an "individualistic" character. This conception is one more point which contrasts strikingly Origen's mode of thought from the dialectics of Plato: There is nothing of the aristocratic Platonic notion about a few souls who, through the study of philosophy, will be delivered from the world -which world will have no end. Accordingly, Origen rejects equally the Gnostic doctrine that there are men who are "by nature" capable of salvation, the "spiritual" men. The quality of a man is not due to what he is "by nature", but it is the result of his own action.<sup>303</sup> In fact, the portrayal of "salvation" through the notion of the "body" of Christ is one more facet of Origen's thought which shows how different this was from either the Platonic or the Gnostic ones.

It is due to his conviction that a rational creature in eternal life is existentially characterized by "love" both to God and to each other, that the "perfection of resurrection" is perceived as pertaining to the entirety, and *only* to the entirety, of rational creatures. The "body" of Christ will not be "perfectly" resurrected (that is, it will not ascend to the Father) until *all* rational creatures have been united in love to God and to each other. This is what is visualized as the perfection of all rational creatures and subjection of them to Christ. And this is the deeper meaning of the constant allegory of the "bride" of *Cant* either as "church" or individual "soul" or rational animal<sup>304</sup> and, in any case, are both portrayed by the figure of "body of Christ".<sup>305</sup> For the final destiny of an individual rational being is the very same destiny of the entire church, namely the entire world which will have been "subjected" to Christ. The final entering into the "chamber"<sup>306</sup> of Christ is the same for a "soul" and the entire church. The former is neither earlier nor later than the latter. The "perfection of resurrection" is *one* eschatological reality which pertains to *all* rational creatures once "subjected" to Christ. It is through this "all" that the individual perspective of a rational being is portrayed and identified to the salvation of the entire world.

The conception of the content of this eschatological reality is quite indicative of Origen's conception of time. For, although eschatological intuitions are a common theme in human thought, there are profound difference as to how eschatological conceptions are visualized and portrayed. W. Herberg<sup>307</sup> asserts that "eschatologies have appeared in two radically divergent forms, distinguished by their attitude to time and history". The distinction is drawn thus: "On the one hand, ultimate destiny may be seen as *consummatory of nature*; on the other hand, it may be seen as a *fulfillment, rectification, or transfiguration of history*". Herberg delineates three forms of

eschatology; "naturalistic, eternalistic, and historicist" and they are regarded as "reflecting three basic modes of understanding reality". The basic distinction, however, is drawn between the "historicist" and the other two; for he deems that the attitude toward time and history in both "naturalistic and "eternalistic" is essentially non-historical.<sup>308</sup>

In adducing this account of W. Herberg, we keep our reservations about the distinction "time and history is Hebraic" whereas "spatial is Greek", which actually underlies his classifications there. Even so, we note that Origen's eschatological concern does not stop in the "salvation" of the *individual*, which was a Gnostic attitude and Herberg regards it as a characteristic of "Greek and Oriental" indicative of the attitude toward time and history.

When Origen insists that eternal life is *in* the world, he does so because he conceives "resurrection" as having a non-individualistic character at all. The "perfection of resurrection" (which constitutes Origen's perception of the ultimate eschatological perspective) applies to the "body" of Christ. For the time being this "body" is the church; but at the "end", when all will have been "subjected" to Christ, this "body" will be the entire world. This is what the "resurrection" pertains to.

It is then quite absurd that A. Harnack regards Origen as one of the "high-watermarks" of the processes he describes whereby the departure or "apostasy" from Primitive Christianity was effected. Origen is described as the most "Hellenistic" and the most consistent and thoroughgoing "de-eschatologizer".<sup>309</sup> What is worse is that Harnack, here regards "Hellenism" as synonymous with "Gnosticism".<sup>310</sup>

In view of this conception of "resurrection", Origen repeatedly refers to the concern of higher creatures close to God (called by Origen as "friends of God"),<sup>311</sup> for the salvation of lower creatures. Thus "the friends of God, angels and souls and spirits ... work together" and "pray together and join in petition"; so "together with men", who

wholeheartedly and genuinely pray to God, "countless sacred powers pray together, although uninvoked, thus assisting our mortal race" and "feeling agony together with us, seeing the daemons opposing and fighting against the salvation of those who most have dedicated themselves to God".<sup>312</sup> It is a "characteristic of a saint to 'weep with them who weep'<sup>313</sup> for it is "a weeping originated in love";<sup>314</sup> it is because of this love that "many times the saints also suffer together with those who suffer because of their sins".<sup>315</sup> Accordingly, "angels rejoice at those who repent";<sup>316</sup> and the "saints, being raised up by angels, enter into the marvellous tabernacle of God", namely they reach "the blessed *end* " which they "expected to occur sequently to them"; and "when a soul, after its trial, enters into the heavenly holies and a triumphant loud voice is shouted as there is a crowd which celebrates at the salvation of him who is saved".<sup>317</sup>

But not only the "angels and souls and spirits"<sup>318</sup> are concerned about the course of rational creatures below them. Christ himself does so, too. He prays together with those praying and it is he who conveys the prayers to the Father.<sup>319</sup> It is he also who "laments and mourns at our sins".<sup>320</sup> And "It is God the Logos who sends prayer up to the Father taking up to himself the passions of man, of whom he undertook the [human] nature".<sup>321</sup>

It is in the light of this conception that the notions of "pre-crucifixion" and "re-crucifixion" of Christ (as discussed in chapter 3) should be understood. Origen's constant view is that the passion and resurrection of Christ was both a real and concrete historical event pertaining to the person of Jesus Christ as well as a prefiguration of what is going to happen to the entire world at the "end". Although the notion of "knowledge" plays a part in the ideal of rational creatures, it is secondary to the notion of "love" in Christ. The fulfilment of the hope will be realized through love. This is why Origen emphasized that "all

the saints hope for everything due to the existence of love" in them.<sup>322</sup> Love is the existential characteristic through which, and due to which, the restoration and "perfection of resurrection" will occur. Until this end comes, however, the "body" of Christ suffers and this is in the condition in which Jesus was at the time of his passion. The restoration which will continue to be "hoped for" until the end, was prefigured in Jesus' own hope for his restoration during his assuming the human nature. It is remarkable that Origen applies the notion of "hope for restoration" to the human Jesus and states:

"It is not astonishing that [the Saviour] hopes for his own restoration", according to the [saying] 'O Father, you glorify me with the glory which I had before the world existed beside you';<sup>323</sup> for "it is possible that he said that 'in solitude' at the time when all his disciples were given scandal and abandoned him."<sup>324</sup>

This is the sense in which Origen considers that not only the resurrection but also the "hope for restoration" was "exemplified"<sup>325</sup> in the person of Jesus. Subsequent to his resurrection, his "body" will be restored, too. However, until the realization of this eschatological expectation, Christ will be suffering:

"John [the Baptist] says showing him; 'Behold the lamb of God which bears and takes away the sin of the world';<sup>326</sup> [and he says that] because he bears the sin until the last enemy, namely death, is abolished, so the entire world will become without any sin; and he does not say either 'he who will bear but not already bearing' or 'he who bore and no more bears'; for the bearing acts upon each one in the world until sin will be abolished from the entire world and the saviour surrenders the purified kingdom to the Father; since not the slightest sin is being subject to the Father's reign, [the kingdom] will, in all its entirety, receive again all which is of God when the saying 'That God may be all in all' (I Cor.15,28) will be fulfilled."<sup>327</sup>



So the hope for restoration will be realized when all rational creatures will be raised up to eternal life. The final end will be an "entering" into divine eternity not of individual beings, but of what is portrayed as the "resurrected body" of Christ, namely of the entire restored world united in love to God and to each other. This is the sense in which resurrection has not an individualistic character.

The point which Origen makes in his above-mentioned reply to Celsus is that the final purpose of divine dispensation (οικονομία) is the world to come to an end by its own free moral action. This is the end which time serves to. For God "has ordered everything so that each spirit or soul, or whatever else rational existence ought to be called, should not be compelled by force against its free choice to any action except that to which the motions of its own mind lead it, -for in that case the power of free choice would seem to be taken from them, which would certainly alter the quality of their nature itself".<sup>328</sup> But "at the same time" "through the unspeakable plan" of God's "word and wisdom ... the motions of their free wills should work suitably and usefully together to produce the harmony of a single world, some being in need of help, other able to give help, others again to provide struggles and conflicts for those who are making progress, whose diligence will be accounted the more praiseworthy and whose rank and position recovered after their victory will be held the more securely, as it has been won through difficulty and toil".<sup>329</sup>

Origen is strongly convinced that "souls are not driven on some revolving course which brings them to the same cycle again after many ages, with the result that they do or desire this or that, but they direct the course of their deeds towards whatever end the freedom of their individual minds may aim at".<sup>330</sup> In any case, "all things work towards an end".<sup>331</sup>

Due to this conception of the course of the world in time Origen

holds that the end will not come "all of a sudden, but gradually and by degrees, during the lapse of infinite and immesurable ages" as "the improvement and correction will be realised slowly and separately in each individual person.";<sup>332</sup> and "this training of ours in the body extends over a very long period, namely up till the time the bodies themselves ... are found worthy of incorruptibility and immortality by reason of the word and perfect righteousness of God".<sup>333</sup>

Thus the world is in need of time. For however "diverse ... the motions may be ... they nevertheless combine to make up the fulness and perfection of a single world, the very variety of minds tending to one end, perfection."<sup>334</sup> This course towards "perfection" takes place but "through time" (διὰ χρόνου),<sup>335</sup> and it is exactly through this notion that both the *reason of existence* of time as well as its *teleological* character are underlined.

Besides, the "end", as "subjection" of all to the Son, is portrayed through the scriptural saying "until I put your enemies a footstool under your feet". On the term "until" (έως), Origen's comment is that its usual meaning in the scripture is to indicate the "most urgent character of the time of what is indicated" (τόν κατενείχοντα περί του δηλούμενου χρόνον).<sup>336</sup>

Thus time, although prolonged, is understood to have not only a teleological but also a *dramatic* character, since the striving towards the end takes place through an encounter of divine will to creaturely one.<sup>337</sup> Time is understood not just to be directed towards an end, but to be directed towards an end *urgently required*.

This is the intrinsic meaning of time. Particularly after the incarnation of Christ, the whole of time to come is fundamentally a time of *tension* between "already" and "not yet".<sup>338</sup> This tension is portrayed through the notion that *every moment* of time constitutes a crucial "kairos"<sup>339</sup> as well as that once the church has already been "in

betrothal<sup>340</sup> with its final destination (namely, "resurrection"), this destination is earnestly and urgently striven for. This is what constitutes the intrinsic meaning of time and its inherent dramatic character.<sup>341</sup>

This is a major contrast in Origen's conception of time to what O. Cullmann has presented as the biblical view of time. When Cullmann postulates that the "infinite" time<sup>342</sup> is consisted of "three aeons at least",<sup>343</sup> he does not say what the reason of existence of time is either before creation or after the end of the present aeon. The only argument he adduces is that he wants to avoid "the danger" of regarding "eternity" according to a "Platonic perception of timeless eternity". Nothing beyond that. But the way in which he treats time is actually not far away from a certain Greek mode of thinking.

It is far too simplistic to speak of "Greek"<sup>344</sup> thought as if all the philosophical categories were perceived in a unique and universal way. "Hellenism" was not only Platonism -which was but a school of thought, a prominent and glorious one, yet not the only one. This is what Cullmann does not seem to be actually aware of. Thus time before creation is postulated as existing, yet there is no reason provided for time to exist. It is just an axiom taken for granted. In that "time", however, nothing happens. This status does not essentially differ from a Platonic conception of timelessness. All Cullman has done is to name the status of "timelessness" as "time". There is no difference *in actuality*. As it is a state where *nothing happens* and there is not any *dramatic* reason for time to exist. The difference between "timelessness" and "time" is just a difference in words and there is nothing beyond the expressional difference. On the other hand, that time is "infinite" in both directions was an Aristotelian as well as a Stoic doctrine. To the Stoics god was also *in* time, as Cullmann holds.<sup>345</sup> To him, time of both "previous" and "next" aeon is nothing more than *ar*.

*element which in itself is of no actual interest*, since nothing happened and nothing is going to happen in it. What Cullmann calls as "new creation" is a state absolutely immutable; nothing happens and nothing is expected to happen there. So he can provide no answer to the question about the meaning of a "rectilinear direction forward"<sup>346</sup> once the end of the present aeon occurs.

In Cullmann's thought *only the present aeon* is a time of a teleological character.

By contrast, in Origen is all time (from start to finish) that has a teleological character.

Thus Cullmann can provide no reason for time to exist. He deems it enough to adduce scriptural passages and to make the extrapolation that the passage in Revelation 10,6 "there should be time no longer" just means "there will be no more delay".<sup>347</sup>

Besides, both the Stoic view of time as well as Cullmann's conception of "past" and "future" aeon, regard time is an *indifferent element*. This time is certainly not a *dramatic* one, its existence is not *necessary* and it is certainly not a *teleological* time. Cullmann feels that it is enough to affirm that the aeon to come will be not the same to the previous one.<sup>348</sup> Yet it is he who stresses that "aeon" means "world".<sup>349</sup> But since *time in itself* is not connected to the world itself<sup>350</sup> his syllogism can by no means entail that the time of the aeon to come will not be the same. For O. Cullmann does not distinguish any *quality* of time at all. On the contrary, everything is time and this is why he holds that there can be no actual distinction between time and eternity in themselves. Eternity is but a very long time and nothing more than that. Thus the only distinction he makes pertains to *quantity* of time.<sup>351</sup> Such a time, however, cannot have the essential characteristic which constitutes the teleological and dramatic character of time. In the final analysis, this is the kind of

time which caused Marcus Aurelius to sink into despair and depression.

Hence, Cullmann actually employs what he desperately wants to avoid: The "danger" of "Hellenism".<sup>352</sup> For the realities which he wants to postulate as "in time" are indeed realities of Platonic "rest"; and time is an indifferent element according to a purely Stoic perception. In trying to avoid "Hellenism", he quite unconsciously fell into the way of thinking of more than one Greek school of thought.<sup>353</sup>

The contrast with Origen's conception of time is quite obvious. He excludes any existence of time either "before" or "after" the creation of the world and yet he stands radically outside any Greek conception of time. After all he was acquainted with Greek thought far better than any contemporary theologian and he did not regard this Thought as a kind of "ghost" haunting him nor as a "leper" which should be avoided by all means. His work *Cels* is an outstanding sample of how calmly and brilliantly he faced Greek philosophical attitudes, exactly because he had a very good command of them. This is why he has been able to transform Greek conceptions, go beyond them and establish his own Christian conception of time.

Thus he affirms the timelessness of the reality "preceding" or "following",<sup>354</sup> exactly because a hypothetical time in these realities would be a time which could not have the fundamental characteristics of his own conception of it; that is, it would not be a *teleological* time, neither a *dramatic* one; nor would it be a time *earnestly needed* for a certain purpose to be fulfilled in it; that is, a time existing for the purpose of attaining to an *end urgently required*.

There are, therefore, two certain fixed points which determine the existence of time itself, namely its beginning and end. The former is what Origen calls "beginning of actual creation" (*αρχή τῆς κοσμοποιίας*)<sup>355</sup> The latter is "the end of things" (*τὸ τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων*)<sup>356</sup> which is expected to occur at the time of "restoration"

(ἀποκατάστασις).<sup>357</sup>

The ascent of all rational beings to eternal life marks the "subjection" of the entire world to Christ and it is subsequently to this that he "surrenders" the kingdom to the Father and the entire resurrected "body" of his enters into the divine being. This is the sense in which Origen affirms that "it is possible" "from today being down" (ἀπό τοῦ σήμερον εἶναι ἐν τοῖς κατωτέρω) to be transposed (μεταβῆναι) and "to become body of God which is up" (ὥστε γενέσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ σῶμα τό ἀνωτέρω).<sup>358</sup>

This marks the end of time and the end of the entire world since the causes of its coming into existence (namely, the world as καταβολή or a "fallen" state) will have ceased to exist. Thus it becomes obvious why Origen regards the status of eternal life as a temporal one. For, in that place, rational creatures are in an active state but they also "wait" for the ascent of all rational creatures in that state. Unless the last of them is found worthy of attaining to that rank of life, time will not come to an end, exactly because it is an indispensable means for free moral action to be realized and to make sense. End of time can occur only at the end of the world, when no rational creature will be in need of time in order to exercise his freedom aiming at his perfection and ascent.

It is a conviction of Origen's that "names" in themselves have a particular *ontological* significance. Beings have been named by the Holy Spirit who "does not simply establish names"; for they are "characteristics of various kinds of action".<sup>359</sup> This is why Origen states:

"Do enquire into the interpretation of names; for they have forcefully been named by the Holy Spirit; besides you should know this, namely that names indicate habits and states and qualities from which it is possible to see the fitness of what is named."<sup>360</sup> Accordingly,

referring to the beings of higher ranks of life, he states that the names "of the higher powers are not names of natures of animals but names of ranks, in which this or that rational nature has been placed by God."<sup>361</sup> In another work Origen states that "there is an entire teaching about names, which is very profound and mystical" and, according to this, names are not just a matter of human convention.<sup>362</sup> He there criticizes those who hold this latter view of names. It is mainly Aristotle and the Stoics that he has in mind and he explicitly refers to them in *Cels*, where he again expounds his views of the ontological significance of names.<sup>363</sup> And in *deOr* Origen articulates a definition of what is a name: "A 'name', then, is a principal appellation which manifests the quality of the being named."<sup>364</sup>

Thus Origen's view is that a *name* is directly related to some kind of *function*. It should be stressed, however, that this conception is related only to the world and it can in no way be applied to the name of God, to which Origen refers, too. Accordingly, this conception can be applied to Christ only in as much as he is related to the world. Speaking even of Christ himself, Origen directly relates the "conceptions" of him to function (τά πράγματα καθ' ὧν τὰ ονόματα κεῖται).<sup>365</sup> This is subsequent to his view that all the conceptions of Christ, except of those of Wisdom and Logos, are related to the world.

Generally Origen holds that "one should not neglect the names, because certain actions are signified by them (πραγμάτων σημαινόμενων) which are useful for the interpretation of the passages".<sup>366</sup> So a *name* and a certain kind of *action* are held to stand in a close relation. In the final analysis, the various names of rational beings express the diversity of the world -diversity which is a fundamental characteristic of a "fallen" status. So, in certain cases, he uses the term *names* as synonymous with the term *rational creatures*.<sup>367</sup>

It is probably because of his opinion about the "names" that a

notion such as this has been attributed to him:

"The creation of all rational creatures consisted of minds incorporeal and immaterial without any number or name, so that they all formed a unity by reason of the identity of their essence and power and energy and by their union with and knowledge of God the Word; ... they took bodies, either fine in substance or grosser, and became possessed of a name, which accounts for the differences of names as well as of bodies among the higher powers; and that thus the cherubim, with the reigns and authorities, the lordships, thrones and angels and all the other heavenly orders came into being and received their names."<sup>368</sup>

It would be superfluous to comment again on points discussed in the previous pages, such as the notion of incorporeality. What is stated about "names", however, deserves a brief comment.

Origen himself does not at all speak about names either "before" the fall or "after" the restoration. It is due to his holding both the doctrine of fall and that of resurrection as "mystical" ones that he does not do so. The passage above has actually nothing to do with his thought. This is but a text plainly extending Platonic views, to which Origen's thought was alien. If there is something which might be regarded as echoing Origen's views of "names" it would only be accidental and certainly the author of the text did it unconsciously. Therefore it would be misleading to discuss Origen's views about "names" in connexion with a text which has nothing to do with his authentic views. When, as we have seen, Origen articulates what he regards as highly subtle notions almost entirely using a scriptural language, and indeed a succession of scriptural passages, it would be absurd to accept that a text in entirely Platonic language may express what Origen held as one of the most sublime and "mystical"<sup>369</sup> notions of Christian faith. This text should be rejected as a whole and Origen's



views of "names" should not be considered in relation to it whatsoever. This is our conclusive comment on that text which G. Butterworth regards as not only virtually but also literally authentic, without, as he usually did, adducing any evidence for that at all.

Origen's conception of reality in the world's absence (namely, either "before" the fall or "after" the absolute end of it) is the divine reality. It is, therefore, natural to assume that the only "name" that may make sense at that state is the name of God, as Origen refers to this.<sup>370</sup> The category of "name" attributed to creatures, however, is closely related to "function" and "change" of personal creatures. In other words, it is by essence related to the category of "diversity" which in no way may be attributed to the divine reality. Beyond that, in order to be possible to speak of "name" of a creature, it is an obvious pre-requisite that this creature *exists*, that is, it has been created as a personal individual hypostasis. This creation, however, is related to space and time, that is to the existence of the world itself. Thus the category of "name" cannot make any sense in the world's absence, in exactly the same way that any category ontologically related to the world cannot make sense in the absence of the actual existence of the world.

The term which Origen uses in order to depict his notion of the significance of names is quite indicative of how he perceives it. He says that the names indicate "pragmata" (πράγματα).<sup>371</sup> The term (Plural of the word "pragma") is derived from the verb "pratto" (πράττω; to act) from which the term "praxis" (πράξις) is derived as well. Etymologically the word "prag-ma" signifies the "result" of an action.<sup>372</sup> The very term *πράγματα* indicates *action* and it particularly signifies the result of an action, as the root (or, "theme") of the word is that of the verb "pratto" (πράττω) which means "to act". It is indicative of how good command of Greek Origen had, that he himself explicates that

"names" are "characteristics of various kinds of action".<sup>373</sup>

It is certainly no accident that Origen has employed the term *πράγματα* in order to articulate the absolute end of the world. For, as discussed above, it is through the term *τό τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων* (the end of things) that he portrays the end of time and of course the end of the world itself.

Thus the *πράγματα*, namely what alludes to *function*, will come to an *end* and this will be the absolute end. So, also from this point of view, "names" do not make sense once "pragmata" (namely, the world itself) have come to an end.

In view of this discussion, certain affirmations in *Princ*, may well be regarded as allusions to the reality following the absolute end of the world. Thus there is an analysis of how the "end of things, in which God is said not only to be in all things but even to be all things"<sup>374</sup> is understood. This is portrayed as a state where "the mind will no longer be conscious of anything besides or other than God, but will think God and see God and hold God".<sup>375</sup> We cannot know the extent to which these expressions are Origen's own words. In view of our discussions, however, we can assume that they must be not very far from them and therefore we could take them (to a certain extent) into consideration.

What these expressions vaguely allude to is a reality where there are no "names". This means that a creature is not "distinct" in the sight of God because "distinction" is an existential characteristic pertaining only to a state of "fall". Strictly speaking, therefore, there is no more personal identity of creatures. For the person which *is* in that reality is Christ himself. In fact this is the state of the providential creation, as portrayed in chapter 1.

This is the sense in which what now are "creatures" then will be "deified" and they will no more have any consciousness of individual

existence and identity but everything will be God. It is also according to this perception that the saying in Isaiah 'Tell ye the former things, what they were, and we shall know that ye are gods; or declare the last things, what they are, and then shall we see that ye are gods.'<sup>376</sup> is stated in the *Princ.*<sup>377</sup> And this is the sense in which those who now are individual creatures then will be not "sons" but *son* of God. Whereas in creaturely status the personal identity of creatures lies in their relation to God, in that state the personal relation between / and *You* can be understood only as the relation between the persons of the Trinity. This end of the world actually is the eschatological "sabbath" of Christ, namely the "rest" from his perpetual intelligible advent and work in the world.<sup>378</sup>

This final end will be accomplished through free moral action in space-time. And when the "jump" from being *out* of God (that is, from corporeality and time) to being *in* God (that is, to incorporeality and timelessness) occurs, then the "world", namely corporeality and time, will come to an end and will cease to exist. This "jump" means that there is no longer any chasm between God and the world just because there is no more any "out" of God, there is no more the reality of space-time as the reasons of its coming into existence will have passed away.

Thus, the reality "after the resurrection" is the divine one, in which no time can be applied. This is the reality which Origen depicts as the perpetual "day" of God, in which there is neither morning nor evening. Certainly G. Florovski, who attacked Origen on the basis of views drawn from the *Princ* could have never imagined that such are the views of Origen. So he speaks of an "after the resurrection"<sup>379</sup> in which there will be no time. He appeals to John of Damascus who described that reality as "a day without evening". Yet what is dramatically striking, is that this is a passage in which John of

Damascus does nothing more but to repeat the same words of Origen's as found in *commJohn* and at the points where he expresses his temporal notions.<sup>380</sup>

Thus, as far as time is concerned, what G. Florovski depicts as his own views supported by those of John of Damascus, are just the views of Origen and the crucial temporal terms which are used are those which Origen first introduced in forming his Christian view of time.

It is because the "fall" was a coming *out* of God and the "perfection of resurrection" is exactly the "return" to the Father, that Origen perceives the final end as a return *into* the Father. To portray the reality "after" the end clearly is as difficult as to portray this reality "before" the fall. For in both cases one has to portray the life of God -which is impossible. Origen speaks of "beginning *or* end" just because both these terms indicate one and the same reality, namely the divine one.

This was why Origen does not to elaborate on the question of the reality after the final end, namely on the notion of resurrection. For he deemed both the doctrines of fall and resurrection as "secret" and ineffable. He knew that, once those truths are explicitly enunciated in words, they are almost bound to be misunderstood.

On the other hand, however, he was confident that a man may comprehend these doctrines through divine enlightenment. It was his anti-Platonic attitude on the causative relation between "virtue" and "knowledge" that led him to leave those truths unarticulated. For a Christian it was a *virtuous life* (and not just any kind of intellectual exercise) that might lead to a comprehension of these secret truths through the Holy Spirit.

In view of our discussion about Origen's conception of "knowledge" and the way of reaching it, we can now consider his

existential attitude in treating these mystical doctrines.

In *Dial* he extensively expresses his "agony" and awe as he intended to say a few words on the "secret" doctrine of the soul. The reader of those introductory words of Origen should note a very significant point: He does not say to his listeners "listen carefully, so that you can understand" or "concentrate on the words, in order to comprehend them". But he says: "We have arrived in a mystical teaching ... transform yourselves, leave evil aside, leave aside any opposition, wrath, quarrels, anger, grievances, dissension, so that there will be no schisms among you but you all are restored in one mind and in one disposition.". And yet he continues: "I feel agony intending to speak, I feel agony intending not to speak." (Αγωνιώ εινεῖν, αγωνιώ καί μή εινεῖν).<sup>381</sup>

This existential attitude in pursuing knowledge is a point a major contrast between Origen and Platonism. Yet, at the same time, it was the same view inhibiting him from elaborating on these mystical doctrines. For it was his conviction that once a man has (through proper disposition and action) prepared himself for the Holy Spirit to visit and enlighten him, then there is no need to express through words what is by nature beyond language. For the man who deserves to learn those truths will be enlightened and will directly be taught by God.

These are his personal existential convictions, due to which Origen did not wish to elaborate on these mystical doctrines. In spite of this fact, however, history has shown that he was misunderstood and the simplistic characterization of Platonism was attributed to him. It is worth while then to try and elaborate a little further on his views on this crucial question, namely on the reality "after" the final end. For one might, for instance, ask what will the eschatological perspective of the Church be. Will it be extinguished into nothing -as Jerome accused Origen? And what is the ground on which Origen affirms that the

teaching about the soul" is "mystical" (ἀνόρητον),<sup>382</sup> and though his views have nothing to do with Plato how do they constitute a "more sublime doctrine"?

To answer these questions we should recall the actual meaning of the "world" and particularly of "life" as well as its relation to time. Origen's view is that speaking of "life" one should see that life *became*, namely it came into being out of non-being and that *creaturely life* did not exist when *time* did not exist either.<sup>383</sup>

So, considering Origen's perception of God and the world, there are four existential realities which should be distinguished:

First, the reality of God, the divine life in which there is nothing but God Himself.

Secondly, the divine reality in which God "decorated" the "body" of the "multi-embroidered" wisdom, namely the providential creation.

Thirdly, the fall out of the "body" of Christ. It is then that creation comes into existence, namely space-time and rational creatures, as individual personalities, come into existence.

Fourthly, the "restoration" to the reality "before" the fall, namely the "perfection of resurrection". This will take place when the absolute end of the world occurs and space-time reaches to an end.

The fall is understood to have occurred out of this reality. This is also the reality which constitutes the eschatological expectation which is portrayed as "restoration". Indeed that reality is perceived as a kind of "our ancient fatherland" which will be attained to after the resurrection.<sup>384</sup> This is the sense in which Origen refers to the resurrection of Christ stating that it was "the first-fruits of our nature" that "was elevated above all the heavens".<sup>385</sup> Thus when Jesus gave a promise to his disciples saying "I will come again and receive you unto myself"<sup>386</sup> he meant that he will take them also in the heavens where he himself is so that they enjoy what he enjoys; and, in order to

portray the content of this reality, Origen quotes Paul: "If we suffer, *we shall also reign with him*".<sup>387</sup> This quotation is one more allusion to the final expectation as "deification" of rational creatures.

In *commMatt* Origen refers to Christ saying that "for the sake of the church he left the father with whom he was when he was 'in the form of God' [Phil.2,6] and he also left the mother, as he was son of *the upper Jerusalem* (καί αὐτός ὢν υἱὸς τῆς ἀνω Ἰερουσαλήμ)".<sup>388</sup> At that point, Origen repeatedly refers to the mystery denoted by the saying of Jesus in Matt.19,5-6 about man and woman that "they twain shall be one flesh" and "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh".<sup>389</sup> And he insists upon the deeper meaning of the saying "they are no more twain, but one flesh" which he repeatedly quotes in those sections of the *commMatt*.

It is in view of the affirmation in that passage of Matthew, namely "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife"<sup>390</sup> that Origen speaks of Christ who "left" his Father as well as his "mother" (namely, the divine reality, portrayed here as "upper Jerusalem" of which Christ is "son") in order to become "one" with the church.

This is what constitutes the eschatological perspective of the church. In support of this, at the same point, Origen adduces the sayings of Paul "you are the body of Christ and members in particular",<sup>391</sup> for "there is nothing else apart from the church which would be said to be 'body' of Christ and 'members in particular' ".<sup>392</sup> It is for the sake of the church that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt upon us"<sup>393</sup> and "cleaved to his wife which has fallen here and they become twain in one flesh".<sup>394</sup>

It is quite remarkable that, in that section of *commMatt*, Origen feels it necessary to enunciate many times and with obvious emphasis the expressions "*they are no more two*" (οὐκέτι εἰσὶ δύο) but they are

"one flesh" (ἀλλὰ σὰρξ μία).

In respect of this, the expressions about Christ who "became" one flesh with the church is but a prefiguration of the eschatological reality. This means that these should be understood in the context of a conception of time in which, after the incarnation of Christ, *the future has become present* through the fundamental categories which determine Origen's conception of time, namely *prophecy, realization, faith, hope, expectation, fulfilment* as discussed in chapter 3. The present historical reality is now "in betrothal" (ἐν ἀρραβώνι) to the eschatological one. In the light of this conception Origen affirms that when Paul says "we have been resurrected together with" Christ<sup>395</sup> he already lives a life "according to the hoped blessed and perfect resurrection, although he has not been resurrected yet."<sup>396</sup>

But, as far the eschatological reality itself is concerned, it still lies in the future. Origen was aware of the question which might be raised by some, namely by those who might argue that since the union of Christ to the church in "one flesh" has already taken place there is no reason to affirm that this "union" is a future occurrence. On this question he says this:

"It is in the sayings of our saviour in the scriptures that each one should try to learn about the reality *after the resurrection*. Yet what pertains to that reality are written in the scriptures not literally so that they could be comprehended by anyone but [they are written] in allegory."<sup>397</sup> For "the law having a shadow of good things to come"<sup>398</sup> contains "narrations about women and men and good marriages" but one should not stick to the letter of the narrations because they actually refer to "*the wedding of the saviour to the church which will take place in the aeon to come.*"<sup>399</sup>

There is a point which should be made here. The expression ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι αἰώνι (in the aeon to come) is frequently used by Origen in



order to denote the final eschatological reality. This happens mainly in his Commentaries where he provides an exegesis of a certain passage at hand whereas in his treatises (such as *Cels* or *deOr*) he is absolutely clear that there is an (unknown to rational creatures) number of "aeons" to come until the eschatological reality portrayed as "the aeon to come" will actually occur. Thus, although he holds that there are many "aeons" to come, and he speaks of a "former judgement" (at the end of this aeon) as well as of a "second" one,<sup>400</sup> yet, in *expProv*, he alludes to the time of the final abolition of evil through the expression "in the aeon to come" (ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι αἰώνι)<sup>401</sup> meaning the final aeon of all time. In general, when Origen employs the scriptural expression "the aeon to come" (ὁ μέλλων αἰών) he suggests the eschatological reality which constitutes to aim of free moral action throughout all time. Thus the "aeon to come" (ὁ μέλλων αἰών) does not necessarily mean "the *next* aeon"; it more often means the "*final* aeon" in the series of aeons which comprise the whole continuum of time.

In the same way, he portrays the eschatological reality through the scriptural expression "end of aeon". In that case he alludes to the end of the *reality* of aeon, namely to the end of the world, as a spatio-temporal reality. This is the context in which he provides an exegesis of the reality which he calls "after the resurrection". In this passage his notion of Christ and the resurrected "body" being "in one flesh" is again manifestly present:

"It would not be unreasonable if some people allege that after all the days of this aeon he who said 'And, lo, I am with you' will no more be with those who have accepted him 'until the end of the aeon'; for 'until' (ἕως) in a certain sense denotes a conception of time. To those people it should be said that 'I am with you' is not the same to 'I am in you'. For, if we are to speak strictly, the saviour is not 'in' his

disciples, but he is 'with' them spiritually, as they have not yet arrived at the consummation of the aeon. But once the consummation of the world, which has been crucified to them,<sup>402</sup> occurs and they face it in accordance to their preparation, then since Christ will be not with them but he will become in them and they will say the saying 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me'<sup>403</sup> and the 'Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me'.<sup>404</sup> We say this maintaining that a somewhat similar exegesis should be understood for the expression 'all the days until the consummation of the aeon' in as much as it is possible for those expressions to be understood by human nature as it is still (ἐτι) in this rank of life (ἐνταύθα); it is in the context of this exegesis that the 'I (ἐγώ)' should be understood so that, until the consummation of the aeon, he who emptied himself and assumed the form of a servant is with those who have been sent to teach all the nations; and as if before he emptied himself he were in a different status, so after the consummation of the aeon he will be with them until all his 'enemies will be put down as a footstool under his feet'<sup>405</sup> by the father; and after that when the son surrenders the kingdom to God the father, the father will say to them 'Lo, I am with you'; and whether it will be said of all the days until a certain time or merely all the days or not all [the days] (νόσας) but all [the day] (νόσαν), this is a question to be enquired into by him who wants to do so."<sup>406</sup>

One can see that in the same passage Origen speaks of the eschatological reality, through the notion of after "the consummation of the world". In that reality Christ will be not *with* but *in* the resurrected world. However, a little further he says that "after the consummation of the aeon he will be *with* them until" the end. This is not a contradiction. It is in accord with the account which we provided above that the terms "end of aeon" should be understood as the context requires. Anyhow, the whole passage makes clear that Christ is with

the world as long as space-time exists. The "restoration" will mark the return to the reality in which Christ is *in* the resurrected body, in "one flesh". This is why Origen (always thoroughly scrupulous in the use of language) depicts the presence of the Logos in the world through the term ὁῶ τῷ κόσμῳ συμπαρεκτεινόμενος (extended alongside *with* the whole world).<sup>407</sup>

In that reality God will be seen as he is in himself, namely as the Son knows him, due to the very fact that what now are *rational creatures* then they will be *son* of God<sup>408</sup> and will be out of time and corporeality.<sup>409</sup>

The eschatological perspective is therefore perceived as the state in which corporeality and time will have ceased to exist and the relation to the father will be in itself the relation of the son to the father. In that state the only conceptions of Christ that may still exist are those of Logos and Wisdom. The conception of "life" as *creaturely life* will have ceased to exist as it is a conception which is understood to pertain not to Christ in himself but to others (οὐχ αὐτῷ ἀλλὰ ἑτέροις).<sup>410</sup> Since, therefore, the final unity of all in the one resurrected "body" means the abolition of any "distinction" or "diversification" the category of "others" does no more make any sense; for resurrection means that all will have become *son*.<sup>411</sup>

This is the conception in the light of which Origen considers Paul's affirmation "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things".<sup>412</sup> He states that the expression "of him" (ἐξ αὐτοῦ)<sup>413</sup> "suggests the beginning of existence of everything" (παριστάς τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς τῶν πάντων υποστάσεως); the expression "through him" implies the world's being kept into existence (καὶ τὴν συνοχὴν ἐν τῷ 'δι' αὐτοῦ); and the expression "to him" suggests *the end* (καὶ τὸ τέλος ἐν τῷ 'εἰς αὐτόν').<sup>414</sup>

The notion of "out" applied to the world in Origen's thought,

deserves particular attention and consideration. It has been asserted that in Christianity there was a distinction between "out of nothing" and "from God", the former being used for the material universe, the latter being normally for Christ the Son, on the grounds that he is of one substance with God the Father.<sup>415</sup> In Origen this distinction is entirely different and certainly much subtler. He has no problem making the distinction between "out of nothing" and "from God", in contrast not to what is asserted about Christian thought, but also to the Neoplatonic one.<sup>416</sup>

In Origen's thought these conceptions are absolutely clear: The notion of "coming into being out of non-being" applies to the providential creation, whereas the notion of becoming "outside of God" indicates the actual creation's coming into existence. Thus the "outside of God" suggests the actual spatio-temporal reality of the world. Whatever is *in* this reality is regarded to be *outside* of God.

In the light of this clear distinction of Origen's, a comparison to the notion of "out of the world" in modern Existentialism would be particularly interesting. Origen would certainly endorse J.P. Sartre's statement that "Without the world there is no selfhood, no person; without selfhood, without the person, there is no world"<sup>417</sup> -but the agreement could be only verbal and accidental. For what Sartre suggests by this expression is that man is nothing apart from his environment and he actually rejects the very idea that man's essence is prior to his actual being. In existentialism the notion of "ex-sistence" is taken in its root sense, namely "standing out". But the "existence" means the fact of finding ourselves *into* the world.<sup>418</sup>

It is remarkable that the existentialist conception of "existence" as "standing out" is based on the notions of *ecstasy* and *transcendence*.<sup>419</sup> But, in the first place, it seems that whereas in Origen the notion of *out*, applied to man, is perceived as "outside of

God", in Existentialism this notion of *out* is stated as "out of the world" -under certain presuppositions and in a certain sense.

However, the question is not as simple as articulated here. And we do believe that a study of Origen's thought with respect to existentialistic conception of *out* would be very fruitful. At this point we cannot pursue this discussion further. We only say that we would not be surprised if what it seems as "difference" would eventually be proved to be not the case and Origen to have anticipated the deeper sense of the "potential being" as well as the notions of "quest of authentic existence" and the "attainment of selfhood" expressed in terms of his theology.

In this work we have treated the question of the nature of rational creatures only to a certain extent -namely, in as much as it is related to our topic. We regard the question, however, as far from being exhausted, and we contend that this aspect of Origen's thought is still generally misapprehended. For what does Origen mean when he affirms that "in each one of us there are two men."<sup>420</sup> He certainly avers that in each man there is what was made in the providential creation and the other made in the actual creation. So, does it mean that each man has *two* personalities? This is the point which has just been left out of study by those who find it a simple solution to attribute "Platonism" to him. But the matter is not as simple, as they would like to allege. If a man were but a "fallen" soul (in a Platonic sense), then the question is about a *change* of *one* personality -from an incorporeal to a corporeal status. Origen, however, is clear that what was made "in the beginning" was not "man and woman" but "male and female", namely it was *human nature* -not individual persons, which was made then. So when he affirms that in each man there are two men, he does not mean two persons, but he means the individual personality as well as the perfect human nature which was made in the

beginning. This is the context in which this perfect human nature should be studied in its relation to the Logos, who is also present in each individual rational creature. However such a topic needs a study of its own.

Thus it can be said that, in Origen's thought, "to come into being out of non-being" implies the providential creation, whereas "to go outside of God" implies the actual creation. Therefore, *created being* applies to the providential creation whereas *created existence*, in a literal linguistic sense,<sup>421</sup> applies to the actual creation.

Thus the notion of "becoming into God" constitutes the actual meaning of "restoration" -an eschatological goal will be attained through "the good road which leads to the good father" (αγαθή γάρ οδός ἡ ἀνάχουσα πρὸς τὸν ἀγαθὸν πατέρα).<sup>422</sup> This is the sense in which Origen speaks of the "restoration of the whole" (τῆς ἀποκαταστάσεως τοῦ παντός),<sup>423</sup> the term "whole" (παντός) being in the Singular, and, as we have seen, meaning "the whole world". For, as he says, "not only one nation ... nor two, but all the ends of earth ...will return".<sup>424</sup> It is against this conceptual background that the notion of "return of the whole" to God "through time"<sup>425</sup> should be understood.

This is how Origen conceives both the origin and the eschatological destination of the world. And this is the sense in which he speaks of the wisdom of God, namely of Christ, as a νοητός κόσμος<sup>426</sup> in which Jesus "teaches that we have our origin".<sup>427</sup> The final reality will be the "body" of Christ, "the whole church of God"<sup>428</sup> in its resurrected form, as the "bride church"<sup>429</sup> living with Christ in "one flesh".

The church came into being out of God's creative *Γεννηθήτω* (Let be) yet fell out of the upper Jerusalem,<sup>430</sup> yet she still is the "body"<sup>431</sup> of Christ. To Origen, the "get out" (ἐξελθε), in the Song of Songs 1,8, is reminiscent of what was told to the church once the fall

occurred.<sup>432</sup> However the church has already received the "betrothal" of its return and cherishes the "hope of resurrection".<sup>433</sup> So after that "exodus" the "whole world" (ὅλος ὁ κόσμος) will again "enter into the house of the upper Jerusalem".<sup>434</sup> Origen constantly relates the figures "body of Christ" to "church" and "soul" or "rational animal"<sup>435</sup> in general and expresses his conviction that the church will be again in its perfect and glorified form, namely it will be into "the mystery of wedding" and "the perfect rest".<sup>436</sup>

Since what was created in the beginning was "invisible", the "earth" itself out of that creation was "invisible and unbuilt" (καί τὸ τῆς γῆς ἀόρατον καί ἀκατασκεύαστον), too.<sup>437</sup> This was the creation which God saw that was "good", namely the "reasons" of everything in the providential creation which was incorporeal, due to the very fact that these *λόγοι* (words, reasons) are incorporeal. This is the most sublime conceptual content applied to "upper Jerusalem", the supreme "city of God" in the wisdom of God, the "embroiderment" of the body of the Wisdom.

This "body" is the original reality of the church and this reality, once came into being will never be dissolved into non-being. "For we know that even if heaven and earth and the things in them pass away,<sup>438</sup> yet the *reasons* of everything will in no wise pass away.<sup>439</sup> For they are being like parts in a whole or forms in a species, which were *uttered* by the Logos who was the divine Logos with God in the beginning."<sup>440</sup>

The creative act of God brought *Being* out of non-being. The creative *utterances* of God "in the beginning", these *λόγοι* which in themselves are the *creatures*, came into being out of non-being. They are *wisdom* themselves. For they constitute what Origen depicts as a "made"<sup>441</sup> yet "living wisdom"<sup>442</sup> which "has a soul, as it were".<sup>443</sup> This is the sense in which he portrays them as "like parts in a whole or

forms in a species".

It was because of the fall that Being became *Existence* and the actual spatio-temporal reality of the world was made, as a "downfall" (καταβολή) *out* of God.

Time is the means through which Existence will become Being again. Existence will pass away when the reason for its being "out" will have passed away. What is a καταβολή will pass away. But the created *wisdom*, the "embroidery" of the "body" of Christ, which came into being out of God creative *Γεννηθῆτω*, constitutes *the created Being* which will not pass away.

Anyone who has studied Plato carefully (and we believe that those who attribute "Platonism" to Origen did not) would see that this is one more point on which Origen dissents from Platonic mode of thought and Platonic notions. To Plato it was an axiom that "everything that has a beginning has also an end".<sup>444</sup> As opposed to that postulate, Origen affirms creation out of non-being (an un-Platonic notion, as well) and explicates that, *although this creation had a beginning, it will have no end*. Thus, both the notions of "beginning" and "end", related to creation, are articulated by Origen in a way and in a context thoroughly contrary to the most fundamental premises of Platonic thought.

So "restoration" actually means the return to the creation portrayed by the terms *ποίησις* and *γένεσις*. This is the state which he calls "beginning" (αρχή) as contrasted to the "end".<sup>445</sup> It is certainly no incident that, in his extensive analyses in the same work, it is the Wisdom, namely Christ, who is identified with the term αρχή. Thus what now are distinct creatures are understood as fallen from what was perfect into what is imperfect; and this happened to all those who "left their own residence" as they "did not remain faithful to their beginning" (μὴ τηρήσαντες τὴν εαυτῶν αρχήν).<sup>446</sup> Thus when it is said that Jesus came in order to "make perfect the work"<sup>447</sup> of God it is not



suggested that the work of God in itself was made "imperfect" but Jesus came in order to help for the "return" to God "not only of man, but of every rational soul". At that point, however, Origen again points out that in the scriptural saying "In order to make perfect the work" of God there is "a deeper mystery denoted" by those words (ηχοῦμαι δὴ ἐν τοῖς τόποις βαθύτερόν τι εναποκεῖσθαι μυστήριον).<sup>448</sup>

Thus it cannot be said that the creative act of God was futile. For it is Origen's conviction that "God makes nothing superfluous nor anything made by him is futile."<sup>449</sup>

In respect of this, the church, perceived as the created "body" of Christ, will not be dissolved into nothing by virtue of the fact that "to come into being out of non-being" exactly pertains to the reality of restoration. This is the sense in which Origen affirms that the created work of God will not pass way.

In a significant point in the *expProv*, he affirms that "creatures" (γεγονότων) themselves, (which are again stated as πράγματα) will pass away (παρελεύσεται). Yet the reasons of them will not pass away they constitute a creation made in wisdom, which was manifested through the words of Jesus Christ which "will never pass away" (οὐδέ γάρ οἱ λόγοι παρελεύσονται τοῦ Σωτήρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).<sup>450</sup>

Commenting on Psalm 21,28, ("All the ends of the world shall recollect and turn unto the Lord") Origen states that "After knowledge came oblivion and after oblivion will come recollection. Therefore is has well been said 'they shall recollect'; for since they have received their own being by God, they shall remember *their creator* and once they remember him they shall return; not one nation, as it has been said, not only two either, but all the ends of the earth, being enlightened through the light of the knowledge of God".<sup>451</sup>

Thus, Origen's conviction is that the return to the "knowledge"

of God will definitely happen. In his view, the deeper meaning of this eschatological "knowledge" is exactly that of "union" as it is found in Genesis 4,1 and it is exactly this notion of "union" that he deems as a "great mystery" using (actually quoting) the very same expression of Paul in Eph.5,32. This is the reality to which Origen alludes when he expresses his conviction that "there was [a reality] when evil did not exist and there will be [a reality] when it will not exist".

Indeed this is the divine reality in which what came into being out of non-being will be in union with the Son of God and the saying of Paul "I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me" (Gal.2,20) will be not a figure but a reality.<sup>452</sup>

Although Origen cites this passage of Paul, he did not wish to elaborate much on the actual content of the eschatological reality denoted by this, as he regarded this as a deep and ineffable mystery.<sup>453</sup> It is only at a point of *commMatt* that he provides a hint of how he perceives this mystery, namely how is it possible to hold that personal identity will reach an end and this end in itself constitutes the "salvation" of the person. There he again appeals to Paul's Gal.2,20, yet proceeds to affirm that "salvation" of a soul is *to enter into the divine bliss* (ἀλλ' εἶπερ νοοῦμεν τό σῶζεσθαι τήν ψυχὴν μακάριον εἶναι, αναφερομένην ἐπὶ τήν ἐν Θεῷ σωτηρίαν). In view of this, he deems that the saying of Jesus "Whosoever wants to save his soul, he shall lose it; and whosoever loses his soul for my sake he shall find it"<sup>454</sup> alludes to this eschatological reality. For to lose one's soul is not necessarily something bad, but there is "a loss of soul in a good sense and for the sake of Christ, since it will be the beginning (ἡροοίμιον) of the blessed salvation (τῆς μακαρίας σωτηρίας).<sup>455</sup>

We said above that to use the expression "after" the creation is an inaccurate expression, since time is terminated at the absolute end. Origen obviously was conscious of that as he always treated language

with a profound scrutiny. This is why, in his reply to Celsus, he just for one moment uses this term<sup>456</sup> but he instantly points out that this is a question which cannot be discussed due to its being an ineffable mystery. Thus he states:

"Then Celsus next says: ... 'Obviously the members of the great church confess this, and believe that the story of the making of the world current among the Jews is true even in respect of the six days and the seventh on which, according to scripture, God ceased from his work<sup>457</sup> and 'retired into the contemplation of himself<sup>458</sup> yet Celsus, because he did not read the scriptures carefully and did not understand them, says that God 'rested', which is not the word used. But the teaching about the creation (περί δέ τῆς κοσμοποιίας) and about the sabbatism which remains for the people of God after it (καί τοῦ μετ' αὐτήν ἀποθεινομένου σαββατισμοῦ τῷ λαῷ τοῦ θεοῦ) is a doctrine which is mystical and profound and 'a word great and hard to explain'."<sup>459</sup>

Hence Origen here uses the term *κοσμοποιία* which is the term currently used by him in order to denote the "world" itself and yet he also uses the expression *μετ' αὐτήν* (after the "world"), suggesting an "after" the duration of the creation. The reality visualized is the "sabbatism (σαββατισμοῦ) for the people of God". This is an expression used in Heb.4,9, yet Origen does not use it as a quotation, as he does with the passage Heb.5,11. In any case, the expression "after the creation" is Origen's. Yet it is obvious that he does not wish to make the slightest implication about this eschatological reality. All he does is to affirm that the absolute end of the creation is to be "followed", as it were, by a reality which is stated through the word of Heb.4,9, namely "sabbatism".<sup>460</sup> and this "sabbatism" is to come "after" the duration of the world.<sup>461</sup> This is the reality of which he says that it is almost impossible to depict in words, since it is a teaching "great", "mystical", "profound" and "difficult to interpret".

If Origen held a notion reminiscent of Platonic views would it be so difficult for him to say a few words about it? It is in the same work, namely *Ce/s*, that he has no hesitation in affirming that certain points of his thought appear to be similar to Platonic views and he quite exactly enunciates which these points are, discusses them, and quite often cites expressions from Plato's works.

There are quite a lot of scholars who point out that certain points in Origen's thought are "Platonic".<sup>462</sup> Yet what they almost always forget to add is that it is Origen himself who both determines these points and, not rarely, juxtaposes his own views with the Platonic ones. So the reader draws the impression that this "similarity" of Origen's views to Platonism is an outcome of a painstaking work by those scholars.<sup>463</sup>

At this point, however, Origen knows that his views have nothing to do with those of any pagan philosopher. This is why he does not proceed with any further discussion on this question and all he does is to affirm the ineffability of his own views. It is certainly no incident that this section of *Ce/s* is one of the shortest of the entire work. Origen cites the challenge of Celsus yet he does not regard him worthy of reply on a question which requires the listener to be of a completely different existential background to that of Celsus. Even then, there could also be little which might be possible to articulate in words.

Why Origen adopts such an attitude is quite clearly enunciated in the same work, namely *Ce/s*:

"The doctrines about these questions are great and mystical. To this teaching the saying 'it is good to hide the mystery of the king'<sup>464</sup> is befitting. For we do not want the teaching about souls (which do not assume a body according to a doctrine of transmigration) to be cast before just any audience, nor that holy things should be given to the

dogs, nor that pearls be cast before swine.<sup>465</sup> For that would be impious, as it constitutes a betrayal of the secret mysteries of the wisdom of God (προδοσίαν περιέχον τῶν απορρήτων τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ σοφίας ῥογίων), of which it is well written; 'Wisdom will not enter into a soul that practices evil neither will it dwell in a body involved in sin' (Εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται σοφία οὐδέ κατοικήσει ἐν σώματι κατάχρεω αμαρτίας).<sup>466</sup> It is then enough to give an account of the doctrines which are said in a mystical way, under the guise of a story, by just following the course of that story, in order that those who have the ability may work out the meaning of the passages for themselves".<sup>467</sup>

Origen's constant care was to not "betray" what he held as secret mysteries of the wisdom of God entrusted to him. This care prevented him from giving a full account of these mystical doctrines, even at the risk of his thought being misunderstood. History shows that while his frequent explicit statements are far from being similar to any Platonic perceptions, have been not proven adequate in preventing miscomprehensions.

Thus, in conclusion of the discussion on Origen's eschatological perceptions, it can be affirmed that the work of the incarnated Christ was not futile and the eschatological perspective of the church is not to be dissolved into nothing as Jerome falsely attributed to Origen. On the contrary, the eschatological perspective of the church is to be one body and "one flesh"<sup>468</sup> with Christ. For this reality is a reality *created* by God "in the beginning" and it is Origen's conviction that this reality will have *no end* whatever. Thus, although he visualizes a notion of God Himself, namely a divine reality in which there is nothing created, and he holds that God created out of an act of his will, it is also his conviction that once a creative act of God occurred, there will be no end of what was made "in the beginning".

This is how Origen maintains that the church will have no end. It will enter into the divine reality being the resurrected "body" of Christ and will be "one flesh" with him and, in that reality, *life* will be only the divine one, namely the life of Christ himself, in a reality of which Paul's saying "I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me"<sup>469</sup> is a figure. This is the mysterious eschatological reality of the church in its union with Christ in love; and this is why Origen holds that it is in the Song of Solomon that the deepest mysteries and truths of Christian faith have been mystically expressed.

Thus Origen articulates his perception of the reality before the fall and after the resurrection through figures such as the "body" of Christ, appealing either to John<sup>470</sup> or to Paul and holding that the body of Jesus was both a historical reality and a prefiguration<sup>471</sup> of the "spiritual house",<sup>472</sup> namely of Christ himself. Yet again Origen maintains his mysticism on this subject. For he states that to speak in detail about this "temple", namely the spiritual meaning of the "body" of Christ, is "difficult to articulate" (δυσδιήγητον) and "beyond our verbal ability" (καί νοητὴ τῆς λέξεως ἡμῶν μείζον).<sup>473</sup>

It is obvious from Origen's own statements discussed in this work, that the doctrines of both the fall and resurrection were of this kind and this is the reason for which he did not wish to enunciate explicitly and systematically his perception of the realities which these mystical doctrines pertain to.

It would not be superfluous to make a final point in order to clarify Origen's eschatological perceptions. The end as perfection of all rational creatures and "subjection" to Christ is different from the final end as "subjection" of Christ to the Father and "surrendering" the "kingdom" to him. The final end is understood to be subsequent, namely to "follow" the former one. Nevertheless there is no reason to assume that any period of time will lapse from the former end to the final one.

The final state of perfection of all rational creatures will obviously occur at the end of a future aeon, after a consummation and judgement. It is then that all rational creatures still in lower ranks of life will be found worthy of attaining to eternal life. The outcome of that judgement marks the "subjection" of all rational creatures to Christ and the abolition of the "final enemy, namely death" as eternal life is also portrayed by Origen as the state of "immortality". The "subjection" of Christ to the Father will occur immediately after that occurrence. No measurable period of time will lapse until this will happen,<sup>474</sup> simply because there is no reason for time to exist further. Beyond that, Origen repeatedly appeals<sup>475</sup> to the saying in Psalms (109,1) as well as in Paul that Christ will reign "throughout the aeons" *until* all his enemies be put as a footstool under his feet. He has made an ad hoc philological analysis of the temporal notion of "until" and he is certainly fully conscious of its exact meaning. Thus his own phraseology on the question does never say that Christ will reign and *then* he will surrender the kingdom to the Father. Such an expression might invoke the argument that it is not necessary that the kingdom will be delivered to the Father *immediately* after the abolition of "death". This is the mistake which Cullmann has made by saying that this will happen at an indefinite moment of the aeon to come. By contrast, Origen sticks to the scriptural "until" which actually denotes the time when a certain status comes to an end. So, although Origen also adheres to the expression of Paul that the final end will occur "after"<sup>476</sup> the "subjection" of all rational creatures to Christ, he perceives the final end as occurring immediately "after" this "end".

However, so long as time exists, the earnest agony and ardent preoccupation is with the course in time, namely with the crucial importance of every moment of time and the dramatic relation between "before" and "after" in time. So, as long as the world exists, the

preoccupation with the course in time is an outstanding one. For it is only *through time* that the restoration from "here" and "down" to "there" and "above" could be attained to. Certainly it would be inaccurate to assert that Origen's understanding of the eschatological destiny of the world is portrayed only in terms of "before" and "after" and not in terms of an "above" and "beyond".<sup>477</sup> But it would be far more accurate to emphasize the outstanding role of time (and indeed, of *every moment* of time) in the cosmic drama towards the eschatological fulfilment.<sup>478</sup>

Hence the distinction between these two "ends" is not so much portrayed in terms of a succession of periods of time but in terms of succession of two quite distinct existential states. There is no conception of a *lasting duration* between the state of perfection of all and the ensuing state of God being all in all. Such a view is perfectly compatible with Origen's conception of a time without duration. This is what allows him to include into one phrase the occurrence of these two "ends", as the absolute end immediately ensuing the occurrence of the perfection of all.

In fact, in the "Commentary on Song of Songs", such a view is quite clearly provided. At that point the discussion is about the passage in Wisdom of Solomon where the notion of "the beginning and the end and the middle of times" (ἀρχήν καί τέλος καί μεσότητα χρόνων) is stated.<sup>479</sup> The pertinent comment reads thus:

"And as to what he says about the 'beginning and the end and the middle of the times', he is speaking of the beginning of the visible world<sup>480</sup> ... the middle is a term relative to the total count of time; and the *end* is that for which we *hope*, when 'heaven and earth shall pass away'<sup>481</sup> ... the end is the things that are yet to be -that is, *the perfecting and consummation of the universe*."<sup>482</sup>

The question of probability of some "next" creation is not what



Origen's thought is preoccupied with, as we pointed out in chapter 2 §3. He cares about the creation which was created by God according to the narration in Genesis and his main interest is with the eschatological perspectives of this world, namely its salvation. He does not deal with possibilities of a "repetition" of what is narrated in Genesis. His deep concern is for the destiny of this *κοσμοποιία* throughout time until the end of it. But if by all means one wants to find some allusions of Origen's related to this question of probability of a "next" creation, then the conclusion will be that he believes that no other fall will occur.

Einar Molland expresses his doubt as to whether or not there will be an end of time according to Origen.<sup>483</sup> He further discusses the possibility of a possible "new" fall and traces affirmations according to which there will be no other fall but he doubts on whether or not they belong to Origen or to Rufinus.

Indeed, in *Princ* there is the affirmation that "...nor will one who is always in the good and to whom God is all things desire any longer to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."<sup>484</sup> It is also true that the conviction that there will be no other fall is stated in the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans<sup>485</sup> which is preserved in Latin. Molland says that, as far as he knows, this latter passage is the only one where Origen "tries to solve the problem".<sup>486</sup>

We can say that the passage which Molland considers is not the only one in which Origen provides his views on this subject and we can affirm that the assertions that there will be no other fall do express Origen's authentic views.<sup>487</sup>

In fact the same notion appears in the *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, in a passage which reads thus:

"If all these things, I say, were brought about by virtue of His Name alone, what do you think His very Self will do? What strength,

what vigour will these maidens get from it, if they ever did attain to His actual, incomprehensible, unutterable Self? I think myself that if they ever did attain to this, they would no longer walk or run, but, bound as it were by the bands of His love, they would cleave to Him, and would have no further power to move again. For they would be one spirit with Him, and that which is written: 'As Thou Father, in me and I in Thee are one, so may these also be one in Us'<sup>488</sup> would be fulfilled in them".<sup>489</sup>

This passage however is preserved in Latin, too, and any doubt about its authenticity would be justified.<sup>490</sup> So, although E. Molland's suggestion that it is only in one passage (namely in *In Rom.* V. 10) that Origen "tries to solve the problem"<sup>491</sup> is not actually the case, his doubts would still remain, as the above mentioned passage from the *Commentary on the Song of Songs* is preserved only in Latin, too.

We, however, do not think that in Origen's thought it was actually "a problem". For similar affirmations can be found in his works in Greek.

Indeed Origen affirms that once the restoration of all takes place, then each one will be a "pillar in the temple of God from where he will not go out again (μή ἐξελευσόμενος ἔξω)". He grounds this conviction on the Revelation of John (Rev.3,12) emphasizing that this scriptural passage is there stated as a "promise" (ἐπαγγελίαν).<sup>492</sup> The same conviction is stated in *commMatt*, where he uses scriptural terms in order to affirm that indeed time itself has an "urgent" character<sup>493</sup> yet once (ἀνάξ) the end there will be no separation from Christ.

Beyond that, the same notion is expressed in a Greek text of *Cant.* He refers to the "bride church, who is the body of Christ"<sup>494</sup> and its eschatological perspective, which is to enter into the divine reality and to be in union with Christ. The saying "My beloved is in me, and I

am in him" (Ἀδελφιδός μου εμοί, καὶ αὐτῷ)<sup>495</sup> exactly implies this eschatological union<sup>496</sup> and this union will never be dissolved, "because it has been said by a prophecy that the Lord, like a shepherd shall feed his flock for ever".<sup>497</sup>

Thus Origen's conviction that there will be no other fall is grounded on his eschatological perceptions. Revelation is not only a *promise* but it is also a *prophecy*. Since it has been pre-announced that there will be no other fall,<sup>498</sup> this prophecy originates in God's foreknowledge. Thus, according to Origen's fundamental perception of prophecy,<sup>499</sup> this saying in Revelation has been said *because* God timelessly *knows* that this will be the reality which is subsequent to the absolute end. Therefore, the conviction about there being no other fall is grounded on the fact that the eschatological reality has been pre-announced by God in the scripture.<sup>500</sup>

With respect to this subject, a remark of H. Chadwick shows that he has not grasped the actual eschatology of Origen, mainly because he did not grasp that the notion of "end" is a homonym which alludes to different realities. Commenting on Molland's views, H. Chadwick points out that the "as long as..." notion of Origen's implies that a new "fall" may be implied out of this expression<sup>501</sup> What has eluded him though is that this "as long as..." (ὅσον γε αἰνούμεν αὐτόν)<sup>502</sup> does not refer to the absolute end but it refers to the eternal life which is an active and certainly not irreversible state. Thus the "fall" implied by the "as long as ..." notion has nothing to do with Origen's doctrine of the fall but it only pertains to a contingent fall of a rational creatures from the supreme rank of life of the world. Hence, H. Chadwick quite erroneously connects this notion to Origen's eschatological ideas.<sup>503</sup>

What stands behind the conviction of Origen that there will be no other fall is actually his own Christian conception of time. We have

already seen how he distances himself from the Greek views of time or how radically he transforms the actual content of terms which either have their origin in the Stoics<sup>504</sup> or are found in Plotinus.<sup>505</sup> At this point, Origen actually distances himself from the Hebraic mode of thought.

It has been maintained that one of the striking peculiarities of the Hebraic notion of the content of time is to be seen as follows: While the Greeks orient themselves towards the *circular* movement of the sun, the Hebrews orient themselves temporally toward the regular change of the moon's phases or toward the *rhythmic* alteration of light and darkness, warmth and cold, etc.<sup>506</sup> This means that the Hebrews did not think of a generation as a circle, but rather "as an eternal rhythm of beginning, continuation, and return to the beginning."<sup>507</sup>

This pattern of thought as described by Boman has been set forth also by Glatzer who shows that the interpretation of history in Tannaitic literature is constructed according to a *heilsgeschichtliche* pattern consisting of three phases, namely "election", "defection", and "return to election". The first is seen as a kind of "paradisical historylessness" in the sense that it is not a "human doing", but God's gracious act. Defection is the beginning of history where human doings are arrayed against the divine purpose. Through the dialectical relation between God and man history results to the restoration of the state of the original election.<sup>508</sup> Thus, the divine-human drama progresses rhythmically through the phases of "original righteousness" (Kehr), "falling-away" (Verfallen) and "restoration to original righteousness" (Wiederkehr).<sup>509</sup>

Certainly no such notion of "rhythmic alternations" is predominant in the Greek thought, although the notion of "eternal return" is not completely irrelevant to it.<sup>510</sup> In fact the Stoic view of recurrence is another notion of "resurrection".<sup>511</sup> This pattern,

however, can be regarded as peculiarly a Hebrew one.

The similarity of Origen's conception of the origin and destination of the world has obvious similarities to the above mentioned Hebrew pattern. There are, however, substantial differences in his thought both to the Hebrew as well as from the Hellenic mode of thought (or, to what is described as such).

First, Origen does not regard time as an everlasting duration. Time is finite, it had a beginning and it will have an absolute end. Thus the "rhythmic alternations" are not different "qualitative periods of time" but they are clearly states of timelessness - time - timelessness.

Secondly, this "rhythm" is understood to occur *once and for all*. It is not the rhythm of an eternal becoming. In the final analysis it is not actually a "rhythm", for this notion, as Boman puts it, actually implies "repetition".<sup>512</sup> This is exactly what constitutes the distortion of Origen's thought by Justinian<sup>513</sup> and Jerome who alleged that Origen held that the appearance and disappearance of corporeality takes place "at intervals", namely intermittently.

So, Origen's conception of space-time looks similar to the Hebrew pattern -but he rejects the idea of an everlasting time, which is actually both Hebraic and Greek. Those who would by all means like to find the similarities of Origen's thought to either of these two modes of thought would say this: The teleological pattern of history is indeed similar to the Hebraic one. The idea of temporal-worldly reality in contrast to an atemporal-divine one is similar to the Greek thought. And so is the idea that atemporal reality is "up" whereas temporal reality is "down" by virtue of the fact that the latter is a "fallen" state -which is a Hebraic notion in Origen's thought! It should be emphasized, however, that to Origen there is no question about the "degree" of reality of the world. There is nothing of the Gnostic tendency to

denounce time as a "lie" and the material world as a lie, too. Origen is explicit in affirming the full reality of history<sup>514</sup> and at any rate he does not regard temporal reality as a pale imitation of the atemporal one whatsoever.

Beyond that, a substantial difference of Origen from the Hebraic pattern of history is that "providential creation" is prior to the actual creation of the world. The "fall" however is neither prior nor posterior to the actual creation. In fact the fall marks the "beginning" of space-time.<sup>515</sup>

In chapter 4 we have quoted three different kinds of eschatology, as delineated by W. Herberg. We hinted our reservations of this classification, because it stems from the simplistic distinction that "time-history is Hebraic" whereas "space-nature is Greek" characteristics of thought. Well, here is Origen's eschatology -yet Herberg would be in difficulty to force it into his classification. In the first place it is a "historistic" eschatology, because time is profoundly *teleological* and there is a purpose to be fulfilled, through rectification of the world. But, at the same time, the end marks the consummation of *nature* -which means that the notions of "space-nature" are not absent from the exposition of that eschatology. Certainly, Herberg would classify Origen's eschatology as an "historistic" one, but, in order to do that, he should make some serious concessions in his criteria of classification.

The point which we wish to make here, nevertheless, is that the world-picture of Origen is conceived in terms of space-time. He does not regards these two constitutive elements of the world as "antagonistic" -which is a current tendency among many modern theologians. In other words, in Origen's thought there is no room for the misleading and simplistic portrayals of "distinction" between Greek and Hebraic thought. -especially in our day, when modern science

regards space-time as *one* reality.

This simplistic distinction has also been articulated thus: The Hebraic world-picture conceives reality as an "order of succession" whereas the Hellenistic one perceives reality as an "order of co-existence". This distinction was made by Leibniz and is promptly employed by Boman.<sup>516</sup> As far as Boman is concerned, this is understandable -it supported the distinction which he employed from von Orelli's work.<sup>517</sup>

But actually the distinction which Leibniz made was based on his knowledge of his era, namely when time and space were regarded as *two* distinct realities (whereas the notion of *relativity of time* would have been rejected out of hand.).

Origen *did* hold a notion of "order of succession" but he also *did* hold a notion of an "order of co-existence". That Space is understood as not only the Euclidean (three-dimensional) one, is today a commonplace in the Mathematical Theory of Spaces. We may well speak of (and study) "spaces" where the *distance* between two points is nil and yet they *do not* coincide (as they should, in our three-dimension space); and we may well make a lot of studies on "spaces" and reach conclusions which, in our Euclidean "space", seem paradoxical or impossible or even irrational.

To Origen, space-time is *one* reality. And, therefore, when time comes to an end, space comes to an end, too. The reality of space-time does not exist without a reason; on the contrary, it has a serious and meaningful *raison d'être*. To the Alexandrian it would be a nonsense to postulate an infinite time, a "time-eternal companion" of God, a time existing without space -and the sort of assertions that authors like O. Cullmann did just for the sake of appearing "near" what was postulated as "Hebraic" attitude -and finally falling into a profoundly "Greek" (judged according to their own criteria) mode of thought.

T. Boman criticizes O. Cullmann's assertions thus: "Eschatology and belief in the timeless Beyond are not two forms of the Christian hope that are mutually exclusive, but they are equally necessary thought-forms enjoying equal privileges and complementing one another. The Bible knows not only of a glory that is coming but also of a glory that belongs to the timeless Beyond. The cessation of all conflict and all history, when God is everything in the universe and in all [I Cor. 15.28], corresponds to the becoming visible of the invisible world of the New Jerusalem which John saw in the Spirit."<sup>518</sup>

Accordingly, A.H. Chroust avers that "Christianity by the very ethical character of its religion directs man's thoughts above everything visible and present to an invisible and future world."<sup>519</sup>

So Origen's conception of the world-picture is *both* an "order of succession", (in which time has a teleological and profoundly dramatic and crucial character) *and* an order of "co-existence" in the *entirely material* reality of the one "single" world.<sup>520</sup> Accordingly, the eschatological perspective entails *both* the fulfilment, rectification, transfiguration of history *and* the end of nature, namely space-time. The eschatological perspectives of the world are understood to lie in the *real future time*. It is through time *and only through time* that the *end* will occur, the *prophesied* and *hoped for* and, in the person of Jesus, *exemplified* and *realized* and *prefigured*, and definitely *expected* eschatological *goal* will be attained, and the *promise* will be *fulfilled*. To anyone who contends that such an attitude is Platonic, or Plotinian or Gnostic, the only proper answer would be to study these streams of thought again.

It is our view, therefore, that it would be rather too scholastic to insist on searching for similarities or differences of Origen's conception of time to either Greek or Hebraic ones. The reason is that Origen's view of time is fundamentally fashioned by and originated in a



fact which does not exist either in pagan or Hebraic thought: This is the historical fact of incarnation of Christ and its eschatological implications. This is the decisive factor with which Origen's conception of time is profoundly imbued. To search for "similarities" of his thought to any school of thought and neglect this decisive factor of Origen's thought would be but a misleading approach of his conception of time. The dramatic character of time has actually been intensified by the fact that the world is in a state of *fallenness* but it is also already in a state of *restoration* because of God's redemptive act. This "betrothal" to resurrection establishes a dramatic tension, because the world is regarded *as* resurrected although it is not resurrected *yet*. This phenomenal paradox profoundly determines the character of time. In fact, the conception of time as a *natural* element of the make-up of the world, its essence and character, were formed according to the *eschatological* implications out of the historical fact of the incarnation of Christ. Also, the constant eschatological orientation of the whole of Origen's thought is vividly present in the formation of his conception of time.

## Conclusion

The conception of time is present in the entire theology of Origen as an element which has been formed in full accordance with his general conception of the world from a Christian point of view. In fact, the conception of time reflects the entirety of his theological views and profoundly imbues them all.

Due to the very fact that his purpose was a theological exposition, he did not devote *ad hoc* treatises to any natural or philosophical problem -one of which was the problem of time. He was unwilling to make analyses of these questions, albeit he had a very good command of this kind of knowledge. What was of interest to him is the knowledge which "saves" and not the knowledge of physics or philosophy just for the sake of erudition. He was satisfied, however, that this latter knowledge is not superfluous. They are steps towards the essential study which is theology. Thus natural and philosophical knowledge are important stages toward theological studies, yet they have to be left behind as soon as one reaches the stage of speaking on theological grounds. His work as a master both in Alexandria and in Caesarea exactly shows that he paid homage to Mathematics, Physics, Astronomy and Philosophy because he regarded them as indispensable steps toward theological study -especially at his time when Christianity was striving to expound its own understanding of God and world and had to be involved in polemical debates with all sorts of non-Christian thinkers.

The scriptural reference to "beginning and end and middle of times", and the whole context at that point of the Wisdom of Solomon, are regarded as indicating the *natural* knowledge.<sup>1</sup> This knowledge is not regarded with any hint of contempt at all. However Origen insists that

the actual aim is the knowledge which "saves" and this is the teaching of Jesus Christ. At any rate, all kinds of knowledge can be found in the Scripture: Ecclesiastes contains *natural* (φυσικήν) knowledge; in the Proverbs it is the *moral* (ηθικήν) one which can be found whereas the deepest, the *theological* (θεολογικήν) one, is hidden in the Song of Songs.<sup>2</sup> The first is a "practical" (πρακτικήν) teaching, the second is the "sophistical" (σοφιστικήν) and the third is the "theological" (θεολογικήν) one.<sup>3</sup> No kind of knowledge is treated with contempt -after all they are found in the scripture and can be comprehended only by those who have "cleansed" themselves,<sup>4</sup> according to his constant anti-Platonic attitude on the relation between Praxis and Knowledge. However, the conviction that theological knowledge is the most sublime and worth while one profoundly imbues Origen's thought throughout his entire work. His ultimate concern and aim is not the "wisdom of the world", neither the "wisdom of the rulers of this world", but the "wisdom of God".

All these mean that Origen was a theologian who ascended the steps of natural as well as moral knowledge. Once this fundamental fact, as well as his utter scrutiny in using crucial terms, is taken into account, then one might discern both his views of particular natural and moral problems. For his views of these kinds of scholarship are explicitly or implicitly expounded throughout his works, too.

Hence, although it has not been our purpose to expound the whole of Origen's theology, we have considered the study of all the aspects of his theology as an indispensable presupposition for the understanding and expounding this crucial facet of his thought, namely his conception of time. For, as we emphasized in the Introduction, how a thinker conceives time is actually a very reliable manifestation of his entire thought. The conception of time stands in close relation to one's entire way of perceiving the whole of reality, in natural, philosophical and theological terms. A certain view of time is formed according to them and it is a

factor which decisively affects the formation of these standpoints. So the notion of time both *determines* and *is determined* by all the aspects of a certain philosophy or theology or attitude to life in general.

This is the fundamental presuppositions on which we have approached Origen's thought in order to see what his conception of time is.

In doing so we have seen that he formed a conception of time which is a new one, profoundly determined by the Christian attitude to life and history. Stoic or Plotinian terms can be found in his articulations of temporal notions. But the conceptual transformations, as well as the terminology which he established in speaking of time, are so radical that in fact it is very difficult to speak of "influence" upon him. Origen ploughed his own way towards the formation of a Christian view of time. It is our conclusion and thesis that he did achieve it.

In affirming this, we do not make any assertions about "orthodoxy" or "non-orthodoxy" whatsoever, as such a purpose has been beyond our scope. We only suggest that the historical fact of the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus stands in the center and determines the core of Origen's thought in general. He did fulfil the task of a Christian thinker of his era, namely to develop a entirely new view of history, stemming from the historical events related to the life of Jesus. His entire work shows, in the clearest and strongest terms possible, that he conceived *a completely new philosophy of history*, a meaning for both the origin and the final perspectives of the *entire world* through the consideration of the historical occurrences related to the life of Jesus.

As a matter of fact, Origen's answer to the question of time has aspects which are natural, moral and theological.

In principle, time is regarded as a natural reality, as an element of the make-up of the world. He employed the early Stoic conception of

time as an "extension" (διόστημα) but the extent to which he would be regarded as indebted to the Stoics goes no further than that. He affirms that time is fully and unequivocally real, that it is also a continuum and a dimension of the reality. In articulating the relation of space proper to time proper he introduced radical affirmations which directly and profoundly influenced his successors in the centuries after him. He clearly establishes an anti-Platonic view: Time *does not move*. It is a continuum *along* which the world moves -it is a dimension of the world. Subsequently, time proper is not movement. The Cappadocians, and particularly Basil, said nothing more about time than Origen did. Basil just repeats what Origen established as a Christian view of time. And, in the light of our analyses in this work, Augustine's originality regarding his theory of time has to be thoroughly re-assessed, as there seems to be much less (in anything) said by him and not already having been set forth by Origen. At any rate, our discussion here has provided the answer to the long standing question about the source of Augustine's theory of time, namely we have showed that it was Origen's views which were employed by Augustine. In fact, space-time is a notion which profoundly imbues Origen's conception of reality. Time is also finite; it came into existence out of non-existence, as a creature of God, together with space. It will also have an end, which will be the end of the reality of space-time as a whole.

The notions of timelessness and temporality are articulated in the most clear terms. God is timeless whereas the world is temporal. The finitude of space-time is most clearly portrayed. There is no notion of any "sacred time" or God's "time" or any infinite time. Time had a beginning, there is a reason for its existence and will have an end when this reason will cease to exist. The distinction between atemporal and temporal realities appears just because time came into existence as an element of the make-up of the world, which will have a finite duration.

"Before" or "after", (so to speak) this duration there is only timelessness.

Origen's conception of time is a fundamental facet of his thought which profoundly determines (and is determined by) how he comprehends God, the world, and the relation between divine reality and creaturely life. His thought must be considered (and has been so) on the fundamental premise that he is above all a theologian, an exponent of the message of the scripture. As such, he is certainly not oblivious of his background, be it natural science or philosophy -a background sound, extensive, as well as deep. What is admirable, however, is that he did not allow his conceptions to be influenced by this background, even though he made large use of the technical terminology available to him. On the contrary, whenever non-Christian philosophical categories are employed, they have undergone such a profound and radical transformation, that it is only in name that they resemble to their pagan synonyms. The transformation of categories of the Stoic definition of time, as well as the radical difference of time as a "dimension" from the same category appeared in Plotinus, are quite eloquent examples of Origen's inspiration. The conception of time, and the pertinent terminology established by him, exerted an profound influence upon Christian thinkers of the later centuries. Even so, however, they have not been always able to follow Origen's radical dissent from pagan conceptions all the way.

Augustine follows Origen's original perceptions, but he was unable to follow him in the radical transformations of the Neoplatonic conceptions of time related to a kind of *motion* of soul as well as to the different conceptual content that time as *διάρκεις* had in Origen. Hence, as far as the conception of time is concerned, Augustine has been regarded not unfairly as being under the influence of Neoplatonism.

Besides, regarding the conception of *αἰών*, again, Origen's successors employed his terminology verbatim -but not his conceptions

all the way. Thus, although Origen enunciates that αἰών is a *natural* reality, Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus postulated αἰών as the timeless divine life. In stark contrast to Origen's views, these writers postulated as αἰών exactly the Platonic and Neoplatonic conception of it. And yet, it has been Origen who is regarded as influenced by these pagan schools of thought.

If Origen holds a notion of atemporality this is not because he has been "influenced" by any stream of Greek thought. After all, the Greek schools which hold the notion of atemporality regard the world as everlasting and not finite, as Origen does. But he holds the notion of atemporality because there is a thoroughly significant reason for time to exist: For it is the element of reality which renders creaturely freedom meaningful. Creaturely freedom in the absence of time make no sense whatsoever. It is *through time* that the world will return to God. This is the *raison d'être* of it. It exists for a *purpose* to be fulfilled and this is why time has a dramatic character and movement has a teleological direction.

It is through this perception that time (although in principle a *natural* element) has also serious, indeed dramatic, *metaphysical* implications. This is where the divine and creaturely will encounter each other and come to a dialectical relation. Creatures learn what the will of God is, through God's manifestations in the world in the various *kairoi*. Yet they are free to conform with it or not to do so, they are free to obey or to disobey. It is exactly because of this freedom that the duration of an aeon, of those which comprise the entirety of time, is not constant or predetermined. The duration of an aeon is not determined either by *cosmical laws* or by any *ontological fatalism*, but it is the outcome of this *dramatic relation* between God and the world.

The nature of this relation is enlightened by the *end*, toward which the world is directed. In Origen's thought the main concern is

with the relation between Now and After, exactly because of the teleological character of time. The relation between present time and the eschatological expectation has entered in a new stage after the incarnation of Christ. For the world is regarded as being in a "fallen" status, yet at the same time it has already been "saved" out of God's action. The world is regarded *as* resurrected but also as not resurrected *yet*. In this phenomenical paradox lies the tension between Present and Future and in the *dramatic* character of time (due to the encounter of divine and creaturely will) the element of *urgency* has been added after the incarnation of Christ.

It is a fundamental view of Origen's that the former events bear in themselves an image of the latter ones. The dramatic character of time has been particularly intense and the element of urgency is already established in it, exactly because the event of death and resurrection "prefigured" and "exemplified" the *end* toward which the entire world is directed. This event was both *real in itself* (as a historical occurrence) as well as *real anticipation* of a future, namely of an eschatological perspective and expectation which is a *real future*. This means that the eschatological fulfilment is expected to occur through time *and only through time*. For the time being, however, the eschatological reality is realized "in betrothal" only in the church. In fact the church itself, through this established relation with the expected real future, constitutes an eschatological reality at the present time. This is eloquently expressed by the homonym "Jerusalem", attributed both to the church and to the eschatological reality. It is in the church and through the church that the urgent character of time is most vividly realized. Hence, the incarnation of Christ not only unveiled the meaning of time before that event, but also enlightened the meaning of it until the very end of space-time.

Thus the teleological character of the process in time has become



more intense because the eschatological direction of the entire world has already been realized in the person of Jesus. If there is a notion of "cyclicity" in Origen's thought it can be found only in his affirmations that "cyclicity" is a manifestation of "futility" -and this latter notion is exactly the opposite of the meaningful and highly and earnestly desired *end*, toward which the entire world is directed.

In the light of this conception, the *natural* reality of space-time is actually conceived as the venue where a struggle takes place. In this struggle both divine and creaturely will are fully and continuously involved. This very fact bestows upon time a *metaphysical* meaning as well; and the dramatic character of time is underlined by the fact that *each moment* of it is a *kairos*. The incarnation of Christ introduced into this struggle a particular tension -in fact the dramatic character of time reached its climax. The struggle is now going on, the end has been already realized -but the struggle will not finish until the "subjection" of all to Christ has become a reality in terms of real future, namely an *actual future* spatio-temporal reality.

The very fact that the course toward this end can be realized but through time, determines Origen's attitude to this element of the worldly reality. To him time is the means through which salvation will be attained and it is due to the existence of time that creaturely freedom makes sense. It does not constitute a "slavery", it is not regarded as a "curse". It is not a "destroyer" of free moral action, because there is an existential causality established in the world and it is through this causality that the process of the world is perceived. There is no "futility" in moral action because there will be a Judgement of it. Therefore in Origen's thought there is nothing of the melancholy (far less: weariness) which the very existence of time caused to the Later Stoics. The destiny of the world is not governed or regulated by the astronomical order or movement. In his strong refutation of

astrology, Origen actually rejects the fatality and stresses the dramatic character of time. Far from being a *δουλεία* (slavery), time is the element of reality which actually *serves* freedom and renders it meaningful. Time is neither a Platonic "image" of divine life; far less is it a Gnostic "caricature" of it, and certainly it is not a "lie". It is simply the indispensable means *through* which the world will be able to return to God. There is nothing of the Gnostic negation of the world and their anticosmic or acosmic attitude. One of the most frequent expressions of Origen is to affirm (with an implicit, but clear, affection) that the world is a "perfect creature" (τό τέλειον τουτί δημιουργημα). The fact that time exists in the world in order to *serve* creaturely freedom is a cause to admire God's creative work and to be grateful to Him for His grace.

In short, regarding the earnestly desired *future* eschatological fulfilment, the Christian existential tendency (as expressed by Origen) is to be saved *through* time -not *from* time. So time in itself means *hope*, not despair and certainly not "panic terror".<sup>5</sup> It means *freedom*, not slavery. It means *expectation*, because through time the *promise* will be *fulfilled*. Time is not a source of anguish. On the contrary, it is earnestly needed in order to reach the reality of the *end*. For what Origen insists on is that evil proper is only the tendency of mind, not the world itself, not matter itself. His general attitude is one of affirmation to the world, not negation of it, because the world is "perfect" and it is not evil in itself. Thus, his attitude towards the reality of time has nothing of any sense of futility and melancholy. Neither has it anything to do with the Gnostic negation of it as a "lie" or, at most, as having no full reality -and with the subsequent Gnostic disgust, hatred, terror, anguish and despair out of time's existence. The loathing and revolt is not against time, but against evil. Since time does not destroy freedom but serves it, there is nothing of the Gnostic

attitude to shatter and destroy time and find a way to negate it. On the contrary, it is because Praxis is *first* and Knowledge comes *after* Praxis, that "knowledge" has an entirely different significance than that in the Gnostics. This causative relation between Praxis and Knowledge is directly opposite to both Platonic and Gnostic conception of knowledge. This Praxis is not a *passive* self-sinking into an atemporal mysticism, but it is an *active* motion in time, perceived in real spatio-temporal terms, according to the teaching of Jesus. It is because "salvation" is understood to lie in the *real future time*, and not as an "escape" from the world into a personal mysticism, that time is regarded with an existential attitude radically different from that of either the Greeks or the Gnostics.

*Affirmation* to the very existence of time proper, *hope*, and a profound feeling of *freedom*, constitute fundamental existential characteristics of a Christian attitude to time out of the view of the world and its perspectives, as portrayed by Origen. The course in space-time is perceived as a continuous movement forward -a movement towards *future*. A course perceived not so much as a cosmic process but as a movement towards *salvation*.

In Origen's thought a process towards salvation is unthinkable out of time. Knowledge through mystical experience Here and Now has only limited possibilities. Since, therefore, salvation will be attained to in future, time, as a demonstration of God's creative work, is actually a demonstration of God's benevolence.

Regarding the ultimate perspective of the process toward salvation, Origen visualizes an absolute *end* which pertains to the *entire* world. This is the "perfection of resurrection" which will take place when even the last rational creature will have been "subjected" to Christ.

In view of this final perspective, eternal life is perceived as an end, which, however, has a personal character and it is an "end" of an

individual rational creature -not the absolute end of the world. Eternal life is a "place" to be reached only through time -therefore (for human beings) in future time; yet it is a place *in* the world, it is a spatio-temporal state, like the rest of the world. Accordingly, it is a state of activity (appropriate to that status) and therefore -according to the existential causality- a "fall" from this state (a notion which has nothing to do with the original fall from the divine reality) is always possible. The perpetual activity and the dramatic character of time pertain to eternal life, like the rest of the world.

The absolute end will occur when evil will have been entirely abolished and there will be no rational creature in need of the existence of time in order to exercise its freedom. It is only then that the "perfection of resurrection" will take place and time will reach its end, since its *raison d'être* will have passed away. In Origen's thought the notion of "body" of Christ plays a decisive role. For it is *par excellence* through this notion that the *non-individualistic*, (and indeed: the non-egoistic) character of resurrection is underlined. The whole of Origen's considerations constitute a radical rejection of the Platonic aristocratic conception of "salvation".

It has been beyond our scope to deal with Origen's "orthodoxy" or "non-orthodoxy", as we said. Regarding his concept of time, however, one could note this: A rather simplistic rule has prevailed among scholars about the relation between Greek and Biblical thought: The Greek is concerned with space and nature, while Biblical thought is concerned with time and history. The critics of Origen stress what they see as "Greek" characteristics of his thought. Others, who regard themselves as "sympathizers" of Origen, strive to play down (to a point of exclusion, if possible) what they consider as "Greek" characteristics and to overstress what they regard as "Biblical" ones. The former focus their attention on Origen's considerations concerning *place*, whereas the

latter want to see only treatment of *time* (in fact, everlasting time) in his works. So, in a relatively recent work, it has been quite erroneously argued that Origen considers "eternity" as an everlasting duration.<sup>6</sup> Views about Origen like these have been discussed in our previous analyses, in which we have, made some remarks about the misleading character of the above-mentioned criteria.

What they all neglect, however, is that the position of either space or time in a certain conception of reality has not an "antagonistic" character -and this is what happens in Origen's thought. In the final analysis space and time constitute *one* reality. The very definition of the relation of time to space by Origen clearly show that he had this *feeling* -if not the conscious conception of this fact. At any rate, this notion is outstandingly present in his works.

This is the fact which modern scholars want to disregard simply because they do not want to see that the world-picture in our century has entirely changed. For the last eighty years it is constantly proven that the world in which we live *is not* the Newtonian one. During the last decade the mathematical Theory of Tensor Calculus, which deals with different spaces, has begun to consider the problem of different spaces (other than the three- or four-dimensional ones) in direct relation with Cosmology. Certainly, the theory deals with other spaces in themselves and not with any contingent "inhabitants" in them.<sup>7</sup> However, the problems which arise are already obvious. Even if one neglects the theory of other spaces, there are significant facts which either cannot or could hardly be denied:

First, the notion of *simultaneity* throughout the entire universe (this, visible universe) makes no sense any more. In the light of Theory of Relativity, statements such as "any moment of time is the same in all places" (P. Gassendi) or "every indivisible moment of duration is everywhere" (Newton)<sup>8</sup> are not valid any more. Modern scholars, so many

years after the Theory of Relativity, and in spite of its constant verification, do not want to (or, cannot) unwrap themselves from the Newtonian world-picture. However, this perception of the world is an irrevocable *past*. A lot of unnecessary debates (particularly works on time proper) would have been avoided if scholars were less slow in realizing that the premises of reflecting on crucial problems have thoroughly changed. That the Theory of Relativity is not easily readable or comprehensible does not make the fact of the radical change less real -it only produces material which is obsolete already before being printed. If, in Plato's era, it was necessary to receive what today is stated as "Platonic education", this was because the old mythological conception of the world had radically changed after the inspired articulations of the Presocratic philosophers. We think that our day has the same characteristics and reflection on metaphysical problems has begun to have the same pre-requisites as that distant era had. For the stability of the conception of the world has been profoundly shaken, since the conception of reality mainly in terms of *space* has radically changed. The simple, stable and easily apprehensible conception of the world has been shattered. This is the actual *next* step after twenty five centuries. Subsequently, it is no more possible to reflect on time independently from space. What we think is that Origen's thought, approached in the light of the new presuppositions, *can* withstand these developments and the challenges which only now begin to arise. Towards this direction a lot of research is still necessary and we think that the findings of such a research will be of utmost interest.

Secondly, it becomes increasingly hard to maintain that human beings are the only rational creatures in the universe (and we, again, do not mention other spaces). What about the saving consequences of the Incarnation of Christ? Some centuries ago, the problem for "orthodoxy" was quite simple: Whether the earth is the immovable center of the

universe, was a matter of a *yes* or a *no*. The ancient affirmation became negation, and the whole problem was surmounted. However, the challenges which arise from the evolution of our new world-picture are not so simple. How will these rational creatures be saved? Were they already saved before human beings? And, if so, how was God's *oikonomia* manifested?

To all these questions Origen has already given a sound, clear and concrete answer: The world comprises many particular spaces. The divine-creaturely relation is not conceived in terms of *God-man*, but in terms of *God-rational creatures* in various spaces. The Incarnation of Christ took place once and for all and enlightened time from its beginning to its end. It was the entirety of rational creatures, and not only human beings, which were saved out of that unique event.

To problems which only now begin to arise (and what is regarded as "orthodoxy" will have to face them sooner or later) Origen has provided answers many centuries ago.

Therefore, there is no need either to understress or to overstress the temporal or spatial aspects of Origen's thought, just for the sake of following misleading and, nonetheless, obsolete criteria. This thought has always been, and still is, a highly controversial one. In this work we have argued that a main reason for this is that Origen's work has not been studied as a whole. The Latin renderings create rather than solve problems and Greek language has ceased to be a universal one long time ago.

The way to eliminate misunderstandings of Origen's thought must not be vitiated by over-simplistic and misleading criteria of what is "Greek" or what is "Hebrew". Nor is it effective to approach this thought either from a "polemical" or from a "sympathizing" point of view. The way is to study Origen's work, especially this which is in the Greek original, in a manner similar to which he himself studied and

interpreted Scripture. That is, to study not only the general views of his entire theology, but also to ponder upon the crucial nuances of his phrases and even words. This is what we have tried to do in this work. And, from such a study, the character of Origen's thought arises as, we think, it really is: An intensely eschatological thought, in which the pivotal point is the historical life of Jesus and its implications in terms of philosophy of history. A thought profoundly imbued and determined by categories such as *providence - prophecy - promise - expectation - realization - faith - hope - waiting - fulfilment*. A thought earnestly orientated towards a promised and, thus, expected *end*. A thought, however, which clearly visualizes the realization of this end through a spatio-temporal view of the world and its perspectives.



## APPENDIX A

In treating the question of Origen's conception of the "world", we pointed out that there is one case in which he applies the expression κόσμος νοητός to Christ and so promised to enquire into this subject in Appendix A. The pertinent passage in which the expression κόσμος νοητός appears is in *comm. John* and reads thus:

"Yet there is another world besides this sensible one consisting of heaven and earth or *heavens* and earth.<sup>1</sup> This is a world where there exist those not seen,<sup>2</sup> and all this is a world not seen and intelligible world (νοητός κόσμος). The view and the beauty of this [world] will be seen by those clean in heart,<sup>3</sup> preparing themselves through seeing this [world], to come to see God himself in whatever way it is in God's nature to be seen."<sup>4</sup>

This is the only passage where Origen applies this term to immaterial things, namely to incorporeality. The danger of misunderstanding, of attributing to him a notion of a world of Platonic ideas, is quite obvious. As we shall discuss later, this danger has not been averted.

What is this "intelligible world" which Origen is referring to?

As if he himself had foreseen the danger of potential misunderstanding of his thought, just after the passage above goes on to explain his view: This "world" is but the son of God.

"You should inquire if, according to a meaning in scripture, the 'firstborn of all creation'<sup>5</sup> may be called cosmos, especially because he is the "wisdom" who is "multi-embroidered" (πολυνοίκιος).<sup>6</sup> For, by virtue of the fact that *the reasons* (according to which everything was made by God) have been made in wisdom (as the prophet says; 'In wisdom have you made them all'<sup>7</sup>), this would be said to be a "cosmos"<sup>8</sup> which is

as more embroidered and different from the sensible world as the Logos (who is completely immaterial) of the entire world is different from the material world;<sup>9</sup> for those [reasons] which decorate matter are not themselves decorated by matter but [they are decorated] by the participation of the Logos and the Wisdom. And see whether he who says 'I am not from this world'<sup>10</sup> is the *soul* of Christ, which [soul] belongs to that world and contains all that world and guides towards that world all those who are pupils of his. That world has nothing which is *down*; like this world has nothing which (strictly speaking) is *up*."<sup>11</sup>

Those who have employed the easy "solution" of construing Origen's thought through the simplistic attribution of Platonism to him, hold that this passage gives them an adequate basis for their allegations. In our discussion here we shall show that to draw a conclusion about "Platonism" is but a total miscomprehension of Origen's thought.

First, however, we should concentrate on the text and make some remarks upon it.

In speaking of a "cosmos" being "in" the son of God it is no accident that Origen puts the term cosmos into quotation marks. It is perfectly clear that the term is used just as a metaphor. This is why it is stated that the term "cosmos" would be used "*in a sense*" (κατά τι τῶν σημαινομένων).<sup>12</sup>

However, the question is: What is this "cosmos" which is said to be "in" Christ and even to be Christ himself? The answer is to be found in the text, too. This "cosmos" is the "reasons" of this world. Recalling our analyses in chapter 1, we can say that this cosmos is the *providentia*, *creation*. This is what came into being out of non-being once God "uttered"<sup>13</sup> the creative *Γεννηθήτω* (Let be), according to the narration of Genesis. For Origen is clear that what came into being out of non-being was but those "reasons" according to which the actual creation was made "later". At that stage there were no personal *individuals*

which came into being. All these are stated as "future beings" (τῶν ἐσομένων).<sup>14</sup> It was no individual human creature that was "made" at that stage, but it was *human nature* that came into being out of non-being. What was created in the providential creation was not any "man and woman", but it was "male and female" which came into being out of non-being.

Further, Origen speaks of the future perspective of human beings. This is to "see" the "sight and beauty" of this world. According to our discussion in chapter 4, it is now clear that he alludes to eternal life. Indeed he does so in the twofold sense that eternal life is perceived, namely both as a personal experience during a lifetime and as an actual spatio-temporal perspective and reality. It is important, however, that Origen does not regard this perspective as an absolute end. Eternal life, the "contemplation" of the son of God, is but a "preparation" (προεπτεριζόμενοι) for "seeing" God himself. This "place" is still a kind of "waiting", as we have seen. Taking into account that, as long as the world exists, "seeing God" is absolutely impossible even for the highest creatures, due to the spatio-temporal nature of them,<sup>15</sup> it is obvious that here Origen alludes to the perspective of the absolute end, namely entering into the divine reality.

Thus, when he speaks of νοητός κόσμος he actually means the created wisdom. It is this wisdom which Origen calls as "our sister" (αδελφή ἡμῶν) because "He who made incorporeal nature, made her, too"<sup>16</sup> in Christ, and thus "embroidered" his wisdom, namely Christ. This is the sense in which he calls the son of God as "cosmos" and appeals to the scriptural passages where he is stated as "firstborn of all creation"<sup>17</sup> and "multi-embroidered wisdom" (πολυνοίκιος σοφία)<sup>18</sup> and it is also stated that God "made everything in wisdom".<sup>19</sup>

This providential creation is the *upper Jerusalem* in the most sublime conception of this homonym, for which the also scriptural

expression "city of God" is used, too. This is the sense in which Origen, in the above stated section of *commJohn*, states that the "soul" of Christ came from that world in order to "guide his pupils towards it". And this is the sense in which Christ is stated as "come out" of God<sup>20</sup> and as "son of the upper Jerusalem" which is portrayed as his "mother"<sup>21</sup> but also a "mother" of ours.<sup>22</sup>

When, therefore, Origen speaks of κόσμος νοητός he refers to the providential creation of the "reasons" and "theoremata" in Christ. This is why he, at the same point, suggest that "in a sense" Christ would be stated as "cosmos" -making clear, however, (both by using quotation marks for the word and through the expression "in a sense") that this but a metaphor.

When Origen says that those who will see this "world" will then see God himself he actually alludes to John,14,9 "Whoever has seen me he has also seen him who has sent me". It is he himself who quotes this passage and adds: "Whoever sees wisdom, whom God made before the aeons in the beginning of his works<sup>23</sup> ascends from the knowledge of wisdom to her father; and it is impossible to apprehend the God of wisdom unless it is done through wisdom."<sup>24</sup>

Origen does not fail to elaborate further on the actual meaning of this "seeing":

"Since the son is in the father, being in form of god before his incarnation, it is God who is, as it were, his place. And if someone apprehends him being in the form of God before his incarnation, he will see the son of God not yet having gone out of god and not yet having been away from his place".<sup>25</sup>

So the "seeing" of the "world", to which Origen refers in the passage above, is but the seeing of the wisdom herself, as discussed in chapter 4. The κόσμος νοητός is but the providential creation, in which no individual being was made and which is also called "wisdom" by virtue

of the fact that the providential creation is both a product of the wisdom of God and *in* the Wisdom, namely Christ. This is why "in a sense"<sup>26</sup> the son of God would be "cosmos" metaphorically.

In the light of this exposition of Origen's thought, we can now discuss certain views which we regard as utterly distorting what the Alexandrian theologian really held and really enunciated. We refer to views of H. Crouzel as well as of both H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti in their translation of *Princ* in French.

H. Crouzel<sup>27</sup> asserts that, in the Alexandrian's theology, there is not only what Origen himself calls providential creation, but also a world of "spiritual beings". So Crouzel actually seems to hold that there are *three* creations (two "spirituals" and one material) and seems to have no doubts that the notion of beginningless creation is a part of Origen's thought.

In view of our discussion in chapter 1, it is needless to discuss this view here again in order to say that this is an extrapolation which is due to failure to grasp what Origen held to be the "object" of God's creation, as narrated in Genesis. It is clear that Origen regards *two* creations -one providential and one actual. In the first, it was the "reasons" which came into being out of non-being. In the second, it was the spatio-temporal reality that was made according to the "reasons" of the providential creation. In the providential creation there is no individuality, and therefore there is no individual "spiritual being". What was made was human nature not any individual human being. What was made was male and female, not a man and woman. And the devil is called "man-killer" because he caused the fall of human nature not the fall of any individual person, as we have seen. H. Crouzel does not adduce any evidence for his allegations. And however hard he tries he will not find any substantial evidence (and this can be only from texts in Greek) where Origen speaks of any other creation apart from those two

creations, which have been discussed in detail in chapter 1. For all Crouzel does is an arbitrary and misleading allegation, which is but the usual "easy solution" of the scholars who have not comprehended crucial aspects of Origen's thought.

Further, H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti speak of *κόσμος νοητός* and *κόσμος νοερός*<sup>28</sup> and give an account of the difference between these two expressions. They assert that *κόσμος νοητός* is the world of "ideas, reasons, mysteries which are contained into the Logos-Wisdom and is eternal like him". And that *κόσμος νοερός* is the "spiritual world" of individual beings. Their view is that *νοερός* means the intelligent, the subject of knowledge, whereas *νοητός* means the intelligible, the object of knowledge.<sup>29</sup> One could hardly make so many mistakes into a small passage like this.

First, beyond the fact that Origen does not hold any notion of "spiritual world of creatures", he does not use the term *κόσμος νοερός* at all. He uses the term *κόσμος νοητός* in the passage discussed above. Thus there can be no discussion of comparison between the two expressions in Origen, for the simple reason that he does not use the former.

Secondly, when we speak of *νοερός* we have in mind the object of knowledge whereas in speaking of *νοητός* we mainly have in mind the human *νοῦς* (intellect) which perceives a non-sensible reality. The translators assert that *νοερός* pertains to the subject of knowledge whereas *νοητός* pertains to the object of knowledge.

This account is exactly the opposite of what is correct. For although the terms may be mutually substituted (when there is no danger of miscomprehension), there is a substantial difference between them:

When a Greek speaks of either *νοερός* or *νοητός* he *may* have one and the same thing in mind.

However, when he speaks of *νοερός* what he mainly has in mind is

*how* this is, so to speak, *constructed* -namely that it is *incorporeal*.

By contrast, when he speaks of *νοητός*, he mainly alludes to *how* this is *perceived* -namely that it is perceived *through mind*.

So (quite conversely from the above stated account of H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti) the term *νοερός* mainly indicates the *object* itself of knowledge, whereas the term *νοητός* mainly alludes to the *subject* of knowledge.

That the assertion of the translators is erroneous can be proved by the etymology of the words.

*Νοερός* has a crucial letter (namely, the letter ρ) which is due to its being derived from the verb *ἀναρίσκει*,<sup>30</sup> which means "fit together", "construct". Thus *νοερός* refers to the *object* and actually suggests how it is constructed, namely that it is incorporeal and, *only* because of that, (namely, *subsequently* to that) it is perceived through mind.

The term *νοητός*, on the other hand, is derived from the verb *νοεῖν* (comprehend) and when it is used it is mainly the human intellect (namely the subject) which we have in mind.

Hence, *νοερός* mainly refers to the *structure* of what is intellectually perceived.<sup>31</sup> *Νοητός* mainly refers to the fact that what is intelligible is *perceived* through mind.<sup>32</sup>

This is why Origen speaks of *κόσμος νοητός* and not of *κόσμος νοερός* whatsoever. For, in employing this metaphorical expression, he does not actually speak of any "world", but he mainly alludes to the fact that those "reasons" and "theoremata" which were created in wisdom, are *perceived* through mind. To regard this creation as incorporeal is but a plausible fact. For this providential creation was consisted of the "clearly uttered words" (ἡροτρανωθέντας λόγους) of God. These "words" in themselves, the *λόγοι*, are the creatures and certainly they in no wise would be regarded as corporeal. Besides, Origen is quite explicit that they are incorporeal, as we have seen.<sup>33</sup> Even the materialist Stoics

(to which only what was a "body" was regarded as "real") had to admit that "speech" is real and yet incorporeal, and included it into the four "incorporeals" which they, out of common and plausible experience, had to admit into their philosophy.

However, the actual difference (as expounded above) between *νοητός* and *νοερός* usually does not create essential misunderstanding if the terms are mutually interchanged. This is what Origen did. Therefore the translators' assertion that Origen "usually" made the "distinction", which they suggest, is not correct. The distinction they make is wrong in itself -and Origen had too good a command of Greek to make such mistakes. Furthermore, Origen did not make any distinction -where (and this was the case usually) there was no danger of misunderstanding. Good command of Greek as he had, however, he employed the right term at the point where he regarded as crucial (as he does in the passage in *commJohn*, which we discuss here) and so he speaks of κόσμος *νοητός* and not of κόσμος *νοερός*, -exactly in order to indicate his view that this is not a "spiritual world" in a Platonic sense, but the term *νοητός* κόσμος is just a figure implying the fact that the Logos of God can be apprehended through mind. He uses this figure (using also quotation marks) in order to indicate not how this wisdom is *constructed*, but how this wisdom is *perceived*.

The same care can be found in *exhMar*, where both the terms are used and the difference is particularly vivid when Origen feels that the distinction should be made. Thus he speaks of the "affinity" of soul to God by virtue of the fact that "they both are *νοερά* and invisible and ... incorporeal".<sup>34</sup> A few lines further in the same paragraph, however, he speaks of *νοητά*, referring to the relation of "human intellect to the *νοητά*" stating that God is "beyond the *νοητών*".<sup>35</sup> Again, in a reliable Greek extant text of *Princ*, (from *Phil*), he implies the perception of soul as incorporeal through the term *νοεράν*: "God created incorporeal



nature to be undestructible and akin to him" (ἀφθαρτον γάρ φύσιν πεποίηκε τὴν νοερὰν καὶ εαυτῷ συγγενή).<sup>36</sup> It is by virtue of this fact that Origen avers that whereas corporeality will pass away, what came into being out of non-being will not pass away -as we discussed in chapter 5.

It is quite obvious, therefore, that Origen was fully aware of the distinction between the two terms -but he uses either of them in its strict sense *only* where he deems it as necessary.

Normally, however, he uses the term νοητός in order to indicate that just he speaks metaphorically.<sup>37</sup>

At other points, he uses the term νοητός in its strict sense, namely to indicate what is, by its nature, perceived through mind.<sup>38</sup>

Elsewhere he uses the same term, namely νοητός, in its looser sense, namely to indicate what is not corporeal.<sup>39</sup> So there are points where Origen directly relates the notion of νοητός to "invisible" and "incorporeal".<sup>40</sup> In that case, however, "incorporeal" suggests not any conception of Platonic idea, but what plausibly is not a "body". Thus he speaks of "incorporeal notions and words and healthy actions" (τοῖς ἀσωμάτοις νοήμασιν καὶ λόγοις καὶ πράξεσιν υγιέσιν).<sup>41</sup> In fact, this is reminiscent of the Stoic view of "speech" (τὸ λεκτόν) as one of the four incorporeals.

There are many passages like this throughout Origen's works, in which one can see what he actually means when employs the term "incorporeal" in relation to the term νοητός, namely that there is no Platonic conception underlying such expressions.<sup>42</sup>

Elsewhere it is the term νοερός which is employed in order to denote what is incorporeal; in that case the term νοερός is used in its strict sense.<sup>43</sup>

Sometimes the use of νοερός is as loose as to imply what is "aetheral". This is a metaphor which, nevertheless, is derived from the

strict sense of the word, namely νοερός as pertaining to the "structure" of a being.<sup>44</sup>

Hence, what the above-mentioned examples show is this:

First, the distinction between the terms νοερός and νοητός in itself, as made by the translators, is wrong.

Secondly, there is no distinction between κόσμος νοερός and κόσμος νοητός in Origen, for the simple reason that he does not use the term κόσμος νοερός at all.

Thirdly, Origen does not "usually" (as the translators assert) make the distinction between the terms νοερός and νοητός. At the point where there is no danger of misunderstanding, the terms may be mutually interchanged.

Fourthly, however, when Origen wishes to denote a conception in which these terms play a decisive role, then the term νοερός is used to denote what is incorporeal, whereas the term νοητός is used in order to suggest that he speaks metaphorically. This is exactly the case in which he speaks of Christ as a *κόσμος νοητός*.

We conclude, therefore, that when Origen regards the Son of God as "cosmos" he does not suggest any Platonic notion of some spiritual world.

Thus, according to his view that the Logos is present into each rational creature, he states that "Cosmos" is a multitude of "divine ideas and sacred words" which are within a man.<sup>45</sup> In this sense, Origen's conception cannot be related to that of Plotinus' either. For the latter had affirmed that "the intelligible things are not out of the mind" (ὅτι οὐκ ἔξω τοῦ νοῦ τὰ νοητά),<sup>46</sup> whereas Origen regards the Logos as being in a man (not in the mind of a man though) as well as out of him. In any case, in *Princ* 11,3,6, any Platonic notion of "ideas" existing in themselves as individual hypostases in a spiritual world is explicitly rejected.

In the same work, namely *commJohn*,<sup>47</sup> Origen uses the expression *νοητός κόσμος* leaving no doubt as to what he actual means by this term. He refers to the Logos, who is present in each rational creature and thus enlightens him towards apprehension of the wisdom of God. In this sense, the Logos is stated as "light of the νοητού κόσμου".<sup>48</sup> This "cosmos" is the wisdom of God and the Logos "enlightens no bodies, but the incorporeal mind through his incorporeal power" so that mind will be able to see what is "intelligible" (νοητά).<sup>49</sup> In this sense the Logos is the light which "illuminates and enlightens the minds of men and of rational creatures in general."<sup>50</sup>

Thus, the term "cosmos", applied to Christ, should be regarded in its fundamental meaning in Greek, namely as "ornament". This is the actual sense in which Origen regards the Wisdom as "cosmos". The meaning of "ornament" stems directly from the scriptural expression about the "multi-embroidered wisdom" (πολυνοίκιος σοφία)<sup>51</sup> and has exactly the meaning in which Paul speaks of the wisdom of God.

In this work, too, the translators maintain the false notion of an "eternal world"<sup>52</sup> which is but a world "of Platonic ideas and Stoic reasons"<sup>53</sup> and further allege that Origen makes the distinction between the spiritual world of ideas and the world of incorporeal spiritual beings.<sup>55</sup> In view of our discussion in chapter 1 (particularly §4), it would be superfluous to comment further on these quite erroneous assertions.

## APPENDIX B

In examinig Origen's account of various kinds of motion, we have made a classification according to his own expositions on the question. However, there is another classification stated in an English edition of *deOr*,<sup>1</sup> which has been made according to the criterion of *what* is that moves. It reads as follows:

1. a. Things without life, held together merely by their form (e.g. stones cut out of the quarry, wood that has lost the power of growing).

b. Bodies of living creatures and growing plants when moved, not *qua*s living creatures or plants, but by an external force, or when they move by virtue of the fact that they are in state of decay and, consequently, of flux.

2. Inanimate things (ἀψυχα: *De Princ.*, III, 1:2) moved by their own inherent nature or soul, i.e. "out of themselves" (ἐξ αὐτῶν), i.e. a growing plant.

3. Animate things (ἐμψυχα), living creatures (ζῷα), moved "from within themselves" (ἀφ' αὐτῶν [*deOr*, VI,1]). The impulse of the spider to weave a web, or of a bee to produce wax, are examples of this (*De Princ.*). [In *De Principiis* Origen, while maintaining the distinction between classes (2) and (3), also groups them as objects which are moved "in themselves" (ἐν αὐτοῖς).].

4. Rational creatures, which are moved "through themselves" (δι' αὐτῶν). In this case the mover and the mover are inseparably connected.

It is obvious that this classification is quite different from that which we have made in chapter 2. In this Appendix we shall show that the aforestated rendering of Origen's views stems from a miscomprehension of what he actually intended to do when he articulated his views on the subject.

The main element which has eluded the translators is that Origen was not interested in giving accounts of motion for the sake of natural knowledge. He was not interested in "giving accounts on natural questions" (φυσιολογεῖν), as we have seen.

What interests Origen is not to "base the reality of free will on

the faculty of motion" as they note.<sup>2</sup> But his purpose is to relate free will with the *cause* of motion.

In both *deOr* and *Princ*, he does not actually enquire *what* moves but his concern is with the *cause* of movement and *where* this cause lies (namely, if the cause of movement is "outside" or "within" the moving object).

Thus the classification should be made not according to *what* is that moves, but according to the characteristics applied to the *cause* of movement. This is what Origen does. For this is the approach which is in tune with his conception of time. And this is the fundamental element which has eluded the above-mentioned translators.

Further, they note that, in *Princ*, Origen "while maintaining the distinction between classes (2) and (3), also groups them together as objects which are moved "in themselves" (ἐν αὐτοῖς)".

However, there is something quite significant behind this "difference" of classification.

It is quite striking that, in both works, the scrupulous Origen does not refer to the movement of heavenly bodies. This is certainly neither because he forgot to do so, nor is it accidental anyway. For throughout his works the reference to heavenly movement is a very frequent theme.

The question which is pertinent to what the translators regard as "difference" in classification of motion from *Princ* to *deOr*, is this: Are heavenly bodies "livings beings" performing the task of indicating time, as they have been orderd by God, or they are inanimate objects? This is what has to be enquired in order to show that there is very significant aspect of Origen's thought, which stands behind this "difference". And the enquiry in this subject will lead not only to an answer to what this "difference" means; but also it will lead to answers which elucidate a certain facet of Origen's thought, in a way which is nonthe less unexpected. We refer to his views as to whether heavenly bodies are

living creatures.

The current view on the question is that Origen did hold that the stars are animate beings. We shall show, however, that this case is not quite that simple.

First, it seems that, in his early works, Origen considered that heavenly bodies have a kind of "soul". This is why, in *Princ*, he does not distinguish between "animals and plants and in a word everything that is held together by its nature or by soul".<sup>3</sup> It was the period when he believed that the heavenly bodies are living animals. In *commJohn* it is quite obvious that heavenly bodies are regarded as having souls of their own.<sup>4</sup>

In *deOr*, however, he clearly makes the distinction between "things that are moved by their own inherent nature or soul, which are also said to be moved *ἐξ εαυτῶν* by those who use the words in their proper sense" (Second Category -above) and "A third kind of movement" which "takes place in living creatures, which is called movement "from within themselves" (*αφ' εαυτῶν*) (Third Category).

"It is not the body itself, namely 'earth' which mourns ... but you should understand that it is the angel who has been ordered for the earth, according to the order of the entire world. Accordingly ... there is an angel who has been ordered for the sun and another for the moon and <others> for the stars."<sup>16</sup>

His opinion on the question is that it is a figure of "homonymity" to speak of the "earth" instead of the "angel" who has been ordeerd for the earth (*ομωνύμως εἶπεν τὸν ἀγγεῖον γῆν αὐτὴ τῇ γῇ*).<sup>17</sup> He states clearly that a heavenly body itself is "inanimate" (*ἀψυχον*) and when one speaks of a heavenly body it is the angel ordered for that which should be understood to be the animate subject -not the heavenly body which is "inanimate". Thus "by the name 'earth' it is the ordered angel who is actually stated" (*οὕτως δὲ ἐρῶ καὶ γῆν λέγεσθαι τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς τεταχμένον*

ἀγγελον).<sup>18</sup>

In fact it seems that since the era of *Princ* Origen had grasped this idea for the first time. The following passage is quite illuminating:

"The creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope, because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.". His view is that here "hope" means that the "sun and moon and stars *and the angels* of God should fulfil an obedient service for the world; and it was for those souls which on account of their excessive spiritual defects required these grosser and more solid bodies and also for the sake of those others for whom this arrangement was necessary that the present visible world was instituted".<sup>19</sup>

It should be pointed out that he speaks not only of "sun, moon and stars" but also of "*angels*", stating that they have assumed "grosser and more solid bodies". Obviously this pertains only to the heavenly bodies and not to angels. For his constant view is that the higher a rational being is the more aethereal its body is. An angel cannot have a "grosser and more solid" body.

Why then does he also here include "angels" in those who perform a duty of "vanity", namely to indicate time? The answer to this lies in Origen's view that "for each heavenly body an angel has been ordered" -an answer which he enunciated about twenty or twenty five years after he wrote the *Princ*.

We do not assert that in this early writing Origen is categorical on that the heavenly bodies do not have souls. He is still uncertain and undoubtedly an evolution of his thought on this question may be traced. It is characteristic, however, that, even in this early writing, he does not appear categorical on the view that heavenly bodies *have* a soul. Hence the involvement of "angels" in his arguments.

At any rate, since the First Book of *commJohn*, where he referred

to the "soul of the sun", until twenty five years later, Origen went a very long way indeed. The notion that the names of "heavenly bodies" do not always indicates these bodies *themselves*, which are "inanimate", but it denotes (by "homonymity") the "angel" who is "ordered" for each one of them, constitutes Origen's radical step on this question. This is how he went beyond the opinion of many Christians that heavenly bodies are living creatures.<sup>20</sup>

Hence, in stark contrast to what is currently believed about Origen, we argue that by the end of his life *he did not believe that heavenly bodies are animate creatures*.

This is the explanation which we provide on the difference of classification of motion between the two works of Origen, namely *Princ* and *deOr*. The difference may seem not striking in the first place. Behind it, however, there is a question which has painfully occupied Origen's thought. Perhaps this is why he does not specify the question at all.



## Notes to the Introduction

1. H. Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (Paris, 1889), translated into English by C. Bogson as *Time and Free Will*, London, 1910; pp.90-1, 98-110.

2. In the period around the years 300-500 A.D. occurred what is known as "Origenistic controversies". The main ancient sources providing an account of this dispute are the following: Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, VI. 3-18; Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, V.27ff. Epiphanius, *Panarion seu adversus lxxx haereses*, 6.63-4; M.41.173ff. Rufinus, *De Adulteratione librorum Origenis*, M.17.616-32. A modern account of these controversies is given by G.W. Butterworth in the introduction of *FP*, pp.ix-xxiv. Also, by Philip Schaff in his *History of the Christian Church*, Vol.III, pp.698-705. Also s. M. Villain "Rufin d' Aquilea, la querelle autour d' Origène", *Rescherches de Science Religieuse*, 27 (1937), pp.5-37, 165-95. In the Fourth Century Origen's chief adversaries were Methodius and Peter of Alexandria. In the Fifth Century, Origen's views were attacked by Epiphanius and Theophilus. According to Socrates (*Ecclesiastical History*, VI.13), Methodius, Eustathius and Appolinarius also wrote treatises against Origen. Chief defenders of Origen were Rufinus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Didymus of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa and Hilary of Poitiers. Pamphilus (and Eusebius) wrote an *Apologia pro Origene*, of which only the first book is extant in a Latin translation by Rufinus (M.17.521ff). Also s. Gregory Thaumaturgos, *in Origenem oratio panegyrica*, M.10.1052. Also s. Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, III.7; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VI.33.

3. For a discussion on the condemnation of Origen's views, s. Schaff, *op.cit.*, pp.770-1; Butterworth, *op.cit.*, pp.xxvi-xxvii; C.C. Richardson, "The condemnation of Origen", *Church History*, 6 (1937), pp.50-64. Gustave Bardy asserts that the fifteen anathemas secured by Justinian in the Fifth Century are directed not so much against Origen himself but against the "Origenists" who were contemporaries of Justinian; Cf. *Recherches sur l'histoire du texte et des version latines dy De Principiis d' Origène*, Paris, 1923; pp.205-6. The text of the fifteen anathemas is given in J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, Vol. IX, pp.396-400.

4. Cf. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, London, 1983, p.151, 316, etc.

5. Cf. R. Hanson, *Allegory and Event*, London, 1959, pp.369ff.

6. Cf. C. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Oxford, 1913, throughout.

These references are but mere examples of attitudes towards the thought of Origen. The relevant assertions, both in these works as well as in a large number of others, will be discussed in detail in due course in this work.

7. It has been alleged that Hebrew thought employed time as its thought form whereas Greek thought employed space. This is a simplistic, yet widespread view among scholars. As an example we cite the work of T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought compared with Greek*, tr. by J. Moreau, London, 1960; pp.123ff. We discuss these assertions in chapters 4 and 5.

8. Cf. Herodotus, II, 53.

9. Homer, Hesiod, Theognis, Musaeus, Epimenides, Acusilaus, Pherecides, Epicharmus were some of the most prominent of them. Cf. H. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 4th ed., Berlin, 1934-37; Appendices I,II,III.

10. Cf. Diels, *op. cit.*, App. II,9.

11. *ibid.* 2,17; 3, A 11; 3, b 2.

12. *ibid.*, 12, B 30; B 31; 12, A 1; A 9; 12, B 60; 12, A 6; A 7; A 8. Cf. Plato, *Cratylus* 402 A.

13. Diels, Frag. 12; Aristotle, *Physics* 250b25 ff.

14. Diels, Fr. 8; Fr. 17, 18; Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, 252a33.

15. Stobaeus, *Eclogue*, I, 420.

16. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 986a27 ff.

17. Aristotle, *Physics*, 222b18; Also Cf. Simplicius, *Commentary in Aristotle's Physics*, 754, 8; 754, 14.

18. Plato, *Parmenides* 156D.

19. Plato, *Parmenides* 151E ff; *Timaeus* 38A ff.

20. Plato, *Timaeus* 37D ff.

21. Plato, *Timaeus* 38B.

22. Aristotle, *Physics*, 251b15 ff.

23. Plato, *State*, 499C.

24. Plato, *Sophist*, 247D; 248C.

25. Plato, *Timaeus*, 29e ff.

26. Since Plato's views in *Timaeus* are articulated in an allegorical form, it is not surprising that even his closest disciples disagree and vastly differ in their opinions about the real meaning of *Timaeus*. Cf. Aristotle, *De Caelo* 280a20;

300b16; *Physics* 251b17; *Metaphysics* 1071b31; 1071b37; *De Anima* 406b25 ff. Aristotle clearly contrasts his views in *De Generatione et Corruptione* 329a13. On this question there is further reference in Simplicius, *Commentary in Aristotle's Physics*, 488,15; 489,6; 489,9; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Commentary in Aristotle's Physics*, 1091a27; Plutarch, *De Animae Procreatione in Timaeo* III,1; IV,1; Philoponus, *De Aeternitate Mundi* VI,8; VI,21; VI,27; VI31.

27. Plato, *Timaeus*, 38B

28. Plato, *Timaeus*, 37C ff

29. Plato, *Timaeus*, 28B; Aristotle rebuked Plato for having thought that time was created; Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, 251b16 ff

30. Aristotle, *Physics*, bk IV, ch. 10-14 (217b29 -224a16).

31. *Physics*, 218b22. Aristotle was criticised for his attempt to relate time to motion by Strato of Lampsacus (also called the "Physicist"). He discusses this question in his work entitled *Περί Χρόνου* and perhaps in his *Περί Κινήσεως*, which are both lost. Cf. Diogenes Laertius V, 59 ff; Simplicius (*op. cit.*, 965, 10); Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum Commentarii*, 242E ff. He was also criticised by Sextus Empiricus (*Pyrrhonia*, III, 136 ff; *Adversus Mathematicos*, X, 176 ff) and Plotinus (*Enneads*, III.7 ff).

32. *Physics*, 218b22 ff; 222b30 ff; 235a11.

33. *Physics*, 218b14 ff.

34. *Physics*, 219a1 ff; 218b22 ff; 236b20; 241a17; 251b11; 218b34.

35. *Physics*, 219a1 ff: "It is evident, then, that time is neither motion nor is it independent from motion"; *Physics*, 218b22: "Clearly then it (sc. time) is not motion"; *Physics*, 218b22: "But neither time exists without change."

36. *Physics*, 221b8; 221a1; 251b10.

37. *Physics*, 219a13 ff; *De Caelo* 279a14.

38. *Physics*, 223b31; 232b21; 236b20; 239a20 ff; 241a15.

39. *Physics*, 220b16.

40. *Physics*, 219b5 ff; 220b15; 221a1; 221b7; 221b11; 221b21; 221b25.

41. *Physics*, 221a3 ff: "To be in time means, for motion, that both it and its essence are measured by time"; 221a8 ff: "To be in time means one of two things: 1. To exist when time exists; 2. as we say of some things that they are "in number" ... or that things have a number. Things which are always (immutable and unchangeable), namely God, "are not, as such, "in time". For they are not contained

by time, nor is their being or existence measured by time" (221b2). They are not "affected by time, which indicates that they are not in time" (221b5). s. also 221b16; 221b21; Hence Aristotle distinguishes the infinite everlasting duration from eternity proper which is a "being above time".

42. *Physics*, 220a24 ff. Cf. 219a10 ff; 219b9 ff; 233a14 ff.

43. Cf. Aristotle's views on the infinite divisibility of all quantities, including time: *Physics*, 227a10 ff; 231a21 ff; 232a23 ff; 233b15; 233b32 ff; 234a10 ff; 234a10; 235a25; 237a10; 237b8; *De Generatione et Corruptione* 317a2 ff; *De Caelo* 306b22.

44. *Physics*, 233a18 ff. Cf. 233a25.

45. *De Caelo*, 279a22 ff.

46. *Physics*, 221b3 ff.

47. Stobaeus, *Eclogue*, I, 250. About Haestiaeus of Perinthus Cf. Diogenes Laertius, III, 46.

48. Plutarch, *Questiones Platonicae*, VIII, 4,3; This definition, however, is not clear as to whether time is the "number" of motion or the "measure" which is *in* motion.

49. Stobaeus, *Eclogue*, I, 250.

50. Simplicius, *Commentary in Aristotle's Physics*, 411, 5 ff.

51. Simplicius, *op. cit.*, 789, 34.

52. Stobaeus, *Eclogue*, I, 250.

53. Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhonia*, III, 137; *Adversus Mathematicos*, X,228; X,177.

54. J. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, Cambridge, 1969; pp.273-4.

55. A. Chrout, "The meaning of time in the ancient world", *The New Scholasticism*, XXI (1947), p.42.

56. SVF, I,26,11-15; ap. Stobaeus, *Ecl.*, I.8. Origen also uses the Stoic term τὸ γινόμενα.

57. SVF, I,26,14-15; ap. Simplicius, *ad Cat.* 80a4.

58. διάστημα κοσμικῆς κινήσεως; SVF, II,164,14ff.

59. As asserted by J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p.278ff.

60. τὸ παρακολουθοῦν διάστημα τῇ τοῦ κόσμου κινήσει; SVF, II,164,15-18. This is how Apollodorus defines time, too: "Time is the extension of the motion of the world" (χρόνος δ' ἐστὶ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου κινήσεως διάστημα.). SVF, III,260,18-19.

61. *op. cit.*, p.273-4. Rist, anyway, states that he is not sure as to whose definition should Zeno's one be considered as more closely related.

62. For example he affirms the pre-existence of human being; Cf. *Meno* 86A; *State* 611A; *Phaedrus* 245D ff; *Phaedo* 75C ff; 106D; *Laws* 781E. But since soul (which in itself is an *orderly* reality) has always existed, this means that orderly reality has *always* existed -which contradicts the statements that time was created when order was brought into the pre-existing chaos and the "original stuff".

63. SVF, II,167,8.

64. Cf. *Physics*, 223a16 ff.

65. Further, according to a testimony of Censorinus, Aristotle himself taught that mankind has been always. At any rate Aristotle was quite clear in his view of the eternity of the world; man is the end of nature, and hence of the world, which itself is without beginning. Cf. F. Hultsch, *Censorini, De Die Natali*. Leipzig, 1867; IV, 3.

66. Cf. Philo, *De Aeternitate Mundi*, I.33 ff: "... ὁ κόσμος ... ὥς δοκεῖ τοῖς Στωϊκοῖς διήκον ἄχρι εκκυρώσεως, οὐσία τις ἢ διακεκοσμημένη ἢ αδιακόσμητος, οὐ τῆς κινήσεως φασὶν εἶναι τὸν χρόνον διάστημα ...". This means that time proper is an element of the world quite independent from whether the "substance" (οὐσία) which constitutes the world is "decorated" (διακεκοσμημένη) (during the cosmic period) or "undecorated" (αδιακόσμητος) (during the catastrophe of the world). Time is *one extension* along which the alternations of this substance periodically take place.

67. SVF, II,166,6-10.

68. Stobaeus, *Eclogue*, I, 252.

69. *Pyrrhonia*, III, 136 ff; *Adv. Math* X, 169 ff.

70. Cf. W. Windelband- H. Heimsoeth, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, p.246. On this particular characteristic of that era we discuss shortly below.

71. Cf. H.C. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", from *Man and Time*, Princeton, 1973, pp.38-84; We discuss the Gnostic attitude to time in chapter 4, comparing it with the conception of time in Origen.

72. *Enneads*, III.7.2.

73. *Enneads*, I.8.14; III.6.14; III.8.3; IV.8.7; VI.4.16; IV.8.3.

74. *Enneads*, III.7.13.

75. *Enneads*, III.7.3.

78. A.H. Chroust, "The Metaphysics of time and history in early Christian thought", *The New Scholasticism*, XIX (1945), pp.337-8.

79. Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos*, 26; The passage reads thus: "Τί μοι μερίζετε τὸν χρόνον, λέγοντες, τὸ μὲν τι εἶναι παρωχηκός αὐτοῦ, τὸ δέ ἐνεστώς, τὸ δέ μέλλον; Πῶς γὰρ δύναται παρελθεῖν ὁ μέλλων, εἰ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεστώς; Ὡςπερ δέ οἱ ἐμπαλέοντες, τῆς νεῶς φερομένης οἰοῦνται διὰ τὴν ἀμαθίαν ὅτι τὰ ὅρη τρέχουσιν οὕτω καὶ ὑμεῖς οὐ γινώσκετε παρatreχόντας μὲν ὑμᾶς, ἐστώτα δέ τὸν αἰῶνα, μέχρις ἂν αὐτὸν ποιήσας θελήσῃ." M.6.862.

80. Therefore A.H. Chroust's assertion that this passage of Tatian constitutes a "phenomenalistic" and "subjectivistic" interpretation of time is not only erroneous but Chroust suggests *exactly the opposite* of what Tatian actually does. For it is the "phenomenalistic" and "subjectivistic" conception of time that Tatian contemptuously rebukes, regarding it as an illusion. Cf. A.H. Chroust: "The Meaning of Time in the Ancient World", p.68.

81. R. Sharples, in collaboration with F.W. Zimmermann, "Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Time*", *Phronesis*, 1982.

82. Cf. W. Windelband- H. Heimsoeth, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie*, p.246ff.

83. *op. cit.*, p.247. 84. *Princ*, I.2.9. The English rendering is from *FP*.

85. *Princ*, I.Pref.7.; III.5.1.

86. *Princ*, I.2.2. 87. *Princ*, I.2.10. 88. *Princ*, I.2.11.

89. *Princ*, II.3.1. 90. *Princ*, I.2.11. 91. Cf. *Princ*, II.2.1.; IV.4.1.

92. H. Crouzel, "L' Hadès et la Géhenne selon Origène", *Gregorianum Commentarii de Re Theologica et Philosophica*, 79 (1978); p.331.

93. Cf. BGF,9, p.20, n.2; This is the ground on which the authenticity of this work of Origen is impugned there.

94. A dating of Origen's works is found in Marguerite Harl, *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe Incarné*, Paris, 1958, pp.70-1; also in Adolf von Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius*, Leipzig, 1904, pp.27-54.

95. Another point which we wish to make is that the *Epistle to Africanum* is a work where the style is extremely unlikely that of Origen. The language and the structure are deliberately sophisticated to a point of an extravagant rhetorical prose. There is nothing of the calm simplicity of Origen's there. For, indeed, in his writings one can discern the iron will with the peaceful and conciliatory spirit of

scientific education and erudition -all expressed in an impressingly simple as well as accurate way. He had a way of expressing the most profound and high doctrines in a language simple, steady and calm, which the reader cannot help to be impressed by. Our view is that Origen gave instructions to Amrosius about the content of the letter and it was the latter who composed the letter in his own style; (at the end of the letter it is stated that Ambrosius wrote the letter dictated to him by Origen). As regards the content, there is one discrepancy which could be singled out. In *frHeb* it is stated that the Epistle to the Hebrew's was not written by Paul himself but it is rather a commentary written either by Clement of Rome or Luke, yet it surely expresses Paul's views. It is stated however that, since the church ancestors regarded it as being Paul's, they did not do it without reason and therefore the tradition should be respected. In *epAfr*, Origen is presented to argue that he can prove that the Epistle is authentically written by Paul. Although the *frHeb* is from Eusebius' writings (s. Bibliography), it should be given more credit. Somehow Eusebius became aware of what Origen really held on the question -and it is historically known that Eusebius was the kind of person who knew how to get access to information he needed for writing his history. Indeed the comments in *frHeb* about the non-elegant use of Greek language by Paul in his Epistles (confesed by Paul himself through the expression *ἡδυνάμην τῷ λόγῳ* -mentioned there) can be found (repeated many times) in Origen's *commRom*, *comm I Cor* and *commEph*. On the other hand, however, the defence of the passage in Daniel (which is the main theme of *epAfr*), as well the views about the Epistle to the Hebrews, show that Origen was unwilling to reject what the church tradition had established for purposes of instruction. And this is a very significant indication of Origen's character: He above all regarded himself as a Christian pastor who was primarily concerned with the spiritual intruction of the Christians according to the traditional faith of the church, at the points where such a tradition was already established.

96. *commJohn*, 20, XXII; s. also *commJohn*, 2, II.

97. *commGen*, 3. (commenting on Gen. 1,16 ff).

98. R.P. Lawson. *Origen: The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, London, 1957, p.26.

99. *homJer*, 20, 1. Cf. Aristotle, *Categoriae*, I. As G. Bardy points out, "la citation est textuelle, mais Aristotle n' est pas nommé par Origène"; Cf. G. Bardy, "Origène et l' Aristotelisme", *Mélanges Gustave Glotz*, tome I, Paris, 1932, p.78, n.4.

100. What the actual content of each of these realities is, will be discussed in

due course in this work.

**101.** It is tragically ironical that the word *answer* (in italics) has been used in cases of this sort, as it happened with R. Sorabji (Cf. *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.151), whereas G. Florovski (*Aspects of Church History*, pp.69-70) speaks of Athanasius' "step beyond Origen" at a point where Athanasius simply echoes Origen's views. We discuss these claims in due course in this work.

**102.** Such is the case of the assertion by H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti that the "eternity" of those saved is an "immutable" state. Cf. H. Crouzel - M. Simonetti *Origène Traité des Principes*, Paris, 1978-84; vol. II, p.76, n.52 ref. to vol. I, p.164, n.305. This point is discussed in chapter 4.

## Notes to Chapter 1

1. In Greek the word for "tense" is the same to that of "time", namely the word *χρόνος* is being used either for "tense" or "time".

2. Cf. John, 1,1.

3. *fr John*, CX; our italics.

4. This view of Origen is also found in the Fragment CXI of Codex MONAC., quoting John, 1,2. (Cf. *fr John*, CXI).

5. *fr John*, I. In the passages here Origen is explicit the *αἰδιος* means *timeless*. So, at least here, there can be no room for the usual dispute as to whether *αἰδιος* has a meaning of "timelessness" or of "everlasting duration". R. Sorabji points out that Plato made no conscientious attempt to distinguish between the terms *αἰδιος* and *αἰώνιος*; Cf. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.116. As we note later in this chapter, it is not clear whether Plato holds the eternity of the Ideas to be in everlasting duration or timelessness. As regards Philo, H. Wolfson points out that he, too, did not make a clear distinction between *αἰδιος* and *αἰώνιος*; Cf. H.A. Wolfson, *Philo*, vol. I, pp.234-5.

6. Prov. 8,30.

7. *exp Prov*, 8

8. The term used for "words" here is *ῥήματα* which literally means "verbs" both in the technical grammatical sense and in the sense of "words".

9. *comm John*, 23, XXVIII. P. Plass holds a view which is absolutely wrong, namely he attributes to Origen a notion of "sacred time" of God; he further alleges that Origen has taken this notion from the Jewish and Christian Gnosticism. s. P. Plass, "The Concept of Eternity in Patristic Theology", *Studia Theologica*, 36 (1982), p.13. A similar view has been taken by J. Danielou in *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, tr. J.A.Baker (London, 1973), pp. 458ff, 469ff. How erroneous



the assertion that Origen had anything to do with Gnosticism is, is discussed later in this work. However we here point out this contradictory fact: Origen has particularly been criticized for holding the notion of timelessness. This has seemed to scholars like O. Cullmann (s. *infra*) as a kind of contamination by the "danger" of Greek thought. It is then quite strange that the notion of "sacred time" is attributed to Origen. Such an assertion would delight the scholars who deny any notion of timelessness, yet it is entirely wrong.

10. *commGen*, 3.

11. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.123.

12. We note, however, that even so, when Origen speaks of the "knowledge" of God, he uses Present tense (which implies timeless knowledge) and not Past tense (which implies foreknowledge). We discuss the question of foreknowledge in chapter 2.

13. *expProv*, 8; s. also *selPs*, 101; 102; *expProv*, 23.

14. *Princ*, I.3.4.

15. *Princ*, IV.4.1.

16. *Princ*, II.2.1.

17. The term *also* suggests that this fundamental theological view of Origen is grounded not only on the notion of divine timelessness, but also on other facets of his theology.

18. *Cels*, VI, 62; our italics.

19. *exhMar*, XLVII.

20. *Cels*, VI, 62.

21. *selPs*, 128.

22. *selPs*, 118; *expProv*, 6.

23. *selPs*, 122.

24. *Cels*, VI, 64.

25. *frMatt*, 244. Τὴν γὰρ ακριβὴ γνώσιν ἣν ἔχει περὶ εαυτῆς ἡ τριάς ουδεὶς οἶδεν;

26. John, 1, 18.

27. *frJohn*, XIV. Θεὸν γὰρ ουδεὶς ὁρᾷ προσβαλὼν νοήσει τῇ εαυτοῦ, ὥσπερ κατ' ἐπιβολὴν ὅψεως ὁρᾷν λεγόμεθα τὰ ὁρατά. ὁράται δὲ καὶ θεὸς οἷς εἰάν κρίνη ὁραθῆναι ἀποκαλύπτων εαυτόν. εἰ γὰρ εὔρα τις τὸν θεόν, οὕτως ἐθεώρει αὐτόν ἢ οὕτως εἶπω, οἷος καὶ ὅσος ἐστίν. ἐπεὶ δὲ μὴ αὐτός ὁρᾷ ἀλλὰ θεὸς εαυτό δείκνυσιν, ὥς οἷόν τέ ἐστιν τοῖς γενητοῖς παρέχει εαυτόν εἰς κατανόησιν· καθὼς καὶ ὁ σωτὴρ φησὶ 'Καὶ ἐμφανίσω ἑμαυτόν.' (Iw. 1, 18) οὐ γὰρ εἶπεν· ἐκεῖνος με ἶδεν, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ἑμαυτόν ἐμφανίσω'.

28. Cf. *homLuc*, 3; Τὰ αἰσθητά, ἵνα βλέπηται, ουδὲν ἐνεργεῖ, ἀλλ' ὁ υγιὲς ὁφθαλμὸς ταθεῖς, εἴτε βούλεται τὸ αἰσθητὸν βλέπεσθαι εἴτε μὴ, βλέπει αὐτό. Οὐ τοιαῦτα δὲ τὰ θεία, οὐδ' ἐν τῷ παρόντι, ὁρώμενα χωρὶς τῆς εαυτῶν ἐνεργείας. Καὶ γοῦν χάριτι θεὸς 'ὠφθη' τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἢ τινὶ τῶν ἁγίων οὐ τοῦ ὁφθαλμοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς

τοῦ Αβραάμ μόνου αἰτίου γενομένου τοῦ βλέπεσθαι αὐτῷ τὸν θεόν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ θεοῦ παρασχόντος εαυτὸν εἰς ἐμφανισμόν τῷ δικαίῳ, ἀξίῳ γενομένῳ τῆς ὁπτασίας αὐτοῦ. Cf. also *commMatt*, 12, 10; 14, 24.

29. *frJohn*, XIII. διό (sc. ὁ νοῦς) ἰδεῖν τὸν θεόν οὐ δύναται κατὰ προσβολὴν νοήσεως. καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐκ τῶν περὶ αὐτοῦ θεολογουμένων ἐννοιῶν καὶ ὧν ἔχομεν ἀμυδρῶς αὐτὸν νοοῦμεν ὡς οἷόν τε· αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεός οὐ διὰ τινος τοιούτου ἀλλ' οἰκειότητι τῇ πρὸς εαυτὸν νόησιν ἔχει περὶ αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸς ὧν καὶ ἡ νόησις καὶ τὸ νοούμενον. διό μόνος ἐπίσταται αὐτὸν ὁ υἱὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς νοούμενος καὶ νοῶν τὸν πατέρα.

30. *frLuc*, 34.

31. I *John*, 3, 2.

32. *commMatt*, 17, 19; νῦν μὲν γάρ, κἂν ἀξιωθῶμεν βλέπειν τὸν θεόν τῷ νῷ καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, οὐ βλέπομεν αὐτὸν καθὼς ἐστίν· ἀλλὰ καθὼς διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν οἰκονομίαν ἡμῖν γίνεται.

33. *commMatt*, 17, 19.

34. *frMatt*, 244.

35. *commJohn*, 19, V -commenting on Rom. 1, 1-7.

36. *commMatt*, 17, 19.

37. *frMatt*, 243.

38. Cf. Col. 1, 15.

39. *Cels*, VI, 17.

40. I *John*, 3, 2.

41. *frJohn*, X. Here Origen alludes to his conception of attaining to eternal life; we discuss this subject in chapter 4.

42. *frJohn*, XIV.

43. *seIPs*, 118.

44. *seIPs*, 118

45. *ibid*.

46. *frMatt*, 54.

47. *seIPs*, 45; τῇ γάρ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ τῇ τῶν πραγμάτων μαρτυρίᾳ καὶ ταῖς παντοδαπαῖς θαυματουργίαις οἷον φωνή τιμι χρησάμενος ὁ θεός, τὸ οἰκεῖον ὕψος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὑπέδειξεν.

48. *seIPs*, 118; ὁ νόμος ἀποκαλύψεως δέεται.

49. *expProv*, 1; Ὅσα γάρ διὰ παραβολῶν καὶ σκοτεινῶν λόγων τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα διὰ τῶν προφητῶν ἐλάλησε, ταῦτα τοῖς μετόχοις καὶ κοινωνοῖς τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος εὐχνωστα γίνεται, ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐκδιδασκόμενα. Ἀσφράχιστος γάρ καὶ ἀκυβέρνητος τὰς θείας Γραφάς ἐπιγνῶναι οὐ δύναται.

50. *excPs*, 77; Μεγάλην δὲ πρόνοιαν ποιούμενος ὁ θεός τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ οὐρανὸν αὐτῷ ἀνοίγει, καὶ τροφήν αὐτῷ δίδωσιν οὐράνιον, καὶ χειραγωγεῖ αὐτὸν αὐτός, χινοῦμενος τοῖς οὐδεύουσι φῶς, καὶ ἄχων ἐπὶ οδοῦς, ἄς καθ' εαυτὴν ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις οὐκ ἐπίσταται.

51. This is a Platonic and Neoplatonic conception of God as necessarily being

Creator -which has lead to the allegation that Origen held a doctrine of eternal creation. This is a current (yet entirely erroneous) opinion. The whole question will be fully discussed in this chapter. Those who claim that Origen held a doctrine of "eternal creation" usually take the opinion that he is a "Platonist" for granted, and *because of that* they attribute this doctrine to him. Hence, what they do is this: *First* they establish the arbitrary allegation that he is a Platonist and they attribute the doctrine of "eternal creation" to him *subsequent* to the erroneous premise that he is a Platonist. What they ought to do, however, is to ground the assertion that he held this doctrine of "eternal creation" *first*; and only *if* they were able to do this, they would be justified to speak about "Platonism" in Origen. But this never happened -this logical procedure was never followed. The inference which underlies their thought is that *since* Origen is a Platonist then he *must* hold the doctrine of eternal creation, as Plato did. Henceforth they deem two or three misleading isolated texts of the Latin paraphrase of the *Princ* (points, which have their counterpoints though -even in that same work) constitute a sufficient basis in order to ground this allegation. That these points of *Princ* are rather interpolations of Rufinus is argued later in this chapter. Beyond that, however, the stark fact is that all these scholars have taken this view about "eternal creation" in Origen without any study of the thousands of pages in which the original Greek texts prove quite the opposite. (For an example of misleading allegations on this point, s. *infra*, n. 76).

52. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.

53. *ibid.*

54. Psalms, 142, 5.

55. Gen. 1, 3.

56. Gen. 1, 6.

57. Prov. 8, 22.

58. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

59. *commJohn*, 1, XXXIX.

60. *ibid.*

61. *commJohn*, 2, IV.

62. *commJohn*, XXXVII.

63. *commJohn*, 2, IX; our italics.

64. This sounds paradoxical, yet when one deals with a problem such as a timeless reality should be prepared to face some statements which sound paradoxical in their current use. It is possible, however, to explain how this synonymity is understood. In the question "*when* was the Logos?" the answer is "timelessly"; this answer is obvious identical to the answer "*in* timelessness". But this last expression is virtually an answer to the question "*in what* was the Logos?". Thus *when* and *in what* are regarded as almost synonyms by virtue of the fact that they both provide one single answer referring to the being of the Logos in the divine timelessness.

65. *commJohn*, 1, IX; 1, XIX; 1, XXXI; 1, XXXIV; 1, XXXIX; 6, XXXVIII; *fr John*, 65. *commJohn*, 1, IX; 1, XIX; 1, XXXI; 1, XXXIV; 1, XXXIX; 6, XXXVIII; *fr John*,

1; *commProv*, 1; *Cels*, III,81; V,39; *frMatt*., 237. *expProv*, 1; *expProv*, 16; *excPs*, 50; *adnotDeut*, 16; *Princ*, I.2.2., III.3.1.

66. *expProv*, 8.

67. *ibid*.

68. *John*, 1,1.

69. *commJohn*, 2, 1; our italics.

70. *frJohn*, 1; our italics.

71. *frJohn*, 1.

72. *selEz*, 13.

73. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

74. s. *infra*

75. *commJohn*, 1, XX.

76. C. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p.210, n.1. His note reads thus: "Origen distinguishes *In Joan*. i.22, between the Epinoiai which belong to Christ as properties of His eternal Nature and those which are accretious, assumed for the purpose of Redemption. τάχα γάρ σοφία έμενε μόνον, ή καί λόγος, ή καί ζωή, πάντως δέ καί αλήθεια' ού μόνον δέ καί τά άλλα όσα δι' ημάς προσείληφε. *In Joan*. i.30 To the latter class belong Firstborn from the Dead, Ιησούτηριον, Light, Shepherd; to the former, Wisdom, Word, Life, Truth. ... the latter are the αισθητά, the former are the νοητά."

The distortion of Origen's views is outrageous indeed. But it is not only a question of distortion -it is a matter of ignorance. Without the slightest reservation, we claim that Bigg *never read* the *Commentary on John* at all. Somehow, someone let him know this passage in Greek (which we explain shortly below). And here is why we assert this:

Bigg alleges that Life belongs to the "properties of the eternal nature" of the son of God. But it is in *commJohn*, too, (namely, in 2,XIX) that Origen makes an inspired and explicit analysis of his view: Whereas the Logos *was* timelessly with the Father (as in *John*, 1,1), life *became* in the Logos (as in *John*,1,4). In fact Origen insists on contrasting the difference between this *was* and *became*, since it is a very significant point for his conception of creation and its relation to God (we discuss this later in this chapter). At any rate, speaking of the conceptions (ένίνοιαι) of the son, he explicates that there was a reality in which "the third and fourth" conceptions of the son (namely, Life and Truth, according to Origen's order, s. *infra*) "did not exist at all" (ότε τά υπό του λόγου υποβαλλόμενα τρίτα καί τέταρτα ουδαμώς ήν). [*ibid*]. And in *commJohn*, 2,XVIII, he explicates that the conception of the son of God as "life" belongs to the category of conceptions which do not belong to Christ himself, but "to others" (ούχ αυτώ αλλ' ετέροις). (We discuss the notion of Categories of the conceptions of Christ later in this chapter). Having buttressed his assertion on the erroneous premise that Origen was a Platonist (and thus he should hold a doctrine of beginningless creation), Bigg alleges that "life" constitutes a beginningless apperception of the son of God. How

wrong this is, will be extensively discussed and proved in this chapter. The fact which remains, nevertheless, is that these views of Bigg have been employed by a long series of scholars after him, as they found it easier to study Bigg's views rather than Origen's works themselves.

77. *commJohn*, 1, XX.

78. C. Blanc, *Commentaire sur S. Jean*, Paris, 1966-82; vol.1, p.125.

79. *John*, 1,1.

80. Cf. *John*, 1,4.

81. *John*, 1,4.

82. *John*, 1,3.

83. *John*, 1,30.

84. *commJohn*, 2, XIX; our italics. E. de Faye makes a serious mistake in asserting that "it is in the nature of the Son to be multiple and diverse" appealing to Origen's analyses of the conceptions of the Son in *commJohn*. What de Faye has not comprehended is that the conceptions of the Son, after Wisdom and Logos, *became* and they could in no way be regarded as being "in the nature" of the Son. Henceforth, the assertions about a "Gnostic influence" upon Origen on this subject are wrong. For the essential notion of Origen's about a "when the third and fourth conceptions of Logos did not exist yet" has eluded E. de Faye. (Cf. E. de Faye, "De l'influence du Gnosticisme chez Origène", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 87 (1923), p.211.). See further §2 in this chapter.

85. *Cels*, 1, 57. The phrase used by Origen here is ὅστις ὡς ἐπεὶ πηγὴ τις καὶ ἀρχὴ τῶν τοιούτων τυγχάνει. Similar kind of expression appears in Plato, *Phaedrus*, 245C; Philo uses a similar expression stating God as "the source and origin of all graces", *de Mutatione Nominum*, 58; Cf. *De Specialibus Legibus*, II,156. It would be misleading, however, to regard this expression as "Platonism". It is but a figure (undoubtedly from Origen's own readings) and this is why he introduces it through the word ὡς ἐπεὶ (as it were). Beyond that, however, what underlies this expression is the fundamental view that the conceptions of the Son *became*, namely it is the creative act of God that is implied. This is the context in which Origen's similar expressions should be regarded; Cf. *Cels*, IV,53; IV,44; VIII,17; *deOr*, XXII.

86. R.A. Norris, *God and World in Early Christian Theology*, New York, 1965, p.154.

87. In view of the vast number of scholars who have asserted similar allegations about Origen's thought, the case of Norris is but an example. To avoid an unnecessary great length of this work, we have to discuss *views* rather than individual scholars. Similar allegations (namely postulating either a Platonic or Neoplatonic perception in Origen's thought) have been made by others, such as C.

Bigg, H. Crouzel, M. Simonetti, E. Molland, J. Danielou, G. Florovski (to mention some of those supposed to be prominent exponents of Origen's thought); the views of them, as well as of others, like (P. Plass, M. Werner, etc.). The assertions of these (as well as other) scholars are discussed in due course later in this work. While C. Bigg puts the title "Platonist" in the title of his work including Origen's thought, M. Werner has no hesitation: He asserts that Origen found a secure position "in the religious philosophy of Neoplatonism" (M. Werner, *The Formation of Christian Dogma*, tr. S. Brandon, New York, 1957, p.118). There are others who think they can provide an account of Origen's thought through affirmations which are grossly misleading, such as this: "Philosophically the doctrine of Origen is a synthesis of Platonic, Aristotelian, and Stoic elements, with the conception of divine providence and of divine law being Platonic and Stoic." (W.A.Banner, "Origen and the Tradition of Natural Law Concepts", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 8 (1954), p.70). The author thinks that he has rendered Origen's thought by that affirmation which is indicative of how much Origen's thought has suffered by distortions.

88. Norris, *op. cit.*, p.154. This expression (which applies to Plato's thought) is typical of the scholars who regard Origen but as a "Platonist"; (Cf. G. Florovski, *Aspects of Church History*, Greek tr. by P. Pallis, Thessaloniki, 1983; p.49). It is already clear, however, that Origen holds a conception of *God Himself* without necessarily thinking of the world at the same time. This is a very significant point of his thought to which we shall return in the §4 of this chapter.

89. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

90. *commJohn*, 20, XVIII.

91. *commJohn*, 20, II.

92. *expProv*. 8. P. Plass is one of the many scholars who approach Origen's thought already determined to read Neoplatonic categories in it. Thus he asserts that, in Origen, Wisdom is one "level" (as he calls it) below God. Such a view is entirely mistaken. s. P. Plass, "The Concept of Eternity in Patristic Theology", *Studia Theologica*, 36 (1982), p.13.

93. This point as well as the ensuing discussion in this chapter show that creation came into being out of non-being by a deliberate *creative act* of God. The allegations of Nygren who tries to argue that Origen really held a doctrine of *emanation* rather than *creation* is entirely wrong. (A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, tr. by Phillip Watson, Philadelphia, 1953; p.382.). Nygren is one among the many scholars who tried to construe Origen's thought as a fundamentally Neoplatonic one -this is the case at this point, too. We refer to other scholars who have made similar approach to Origen's thought later on in this work.

94. Gen.1,26-27.      95. Gen.2,7.      96. *Dial*, (BGF, v.16, p.374.).
97. *Cels*, IV, 40.      98. *commMatt*, 14,16.      99. Gen.1,10.
100. Gen.1,20.      101. Gen.1,24.      102. *commJohn*, 13, XLII.
103. Prov.8,22.      104. *frJohn*, I.
105. *commJohn*, 1, XXXIV; Cf. *exhMar*, XLVII.
106. *Cels*, V, 39.      107. *commEph*, Fr.VI, p.241.
108. *op. cit.*, p.240-1.
109. *commJohn*, 19, XXII, quoting Psalm 103,24.
110. *Dial*, (BGF, vol.16, p.374.).      111. *commMatt*, 14, 16.
112. Gen.1,26.      113. I Cor.15,49. *homJer*, 2,1.
114. τῶν εσομένων: s. *commJohn*, 1, XIX; τὰ εσόμενα: s. *frJohn*, I.
115. *Cels*, VII, 37. Origen relates this conception to the saying "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rom.1,20).
116. s. *infra*, our discussion on the meaning of the "not seen" and "invisible" notions.
117. *selPs*, 138.      118. s. chapter 4.      119. *selPs*, 138.
120. *selPs*, 2.      121. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.
122. *expProv*, 1; *selPs*, 138.      123. *selPs*, 138.
124. *excPs*, 36; *Cant*, 3; *Cels*, V, 39; *commJohn*, 2, XVIII; 2, XXVIII.
125. "in" the wisdom; s. *commJohn*, 1, XIX; "names of the Son"; s. *commJohn*, 1, XX.
126. Cf. Col. 1,15; *commJohn*, 1, XXXVIII.
127. He quotes Psalms, 44,2-3, where it is stated: "My heart has disgorged an utterance which is good".
128. Cf. *Princ*, I.2.2. "...these created things that had been as it were outlined and prefigured in herself (sc. wisdom)...".
129. *Cant*, 3. It is not at all accidental that the term "theoremata" (θεωρήματα) is used in the above-cited passage, namely *Cant*, 3, exactly at the point where an exegesis is provided about the mystical communion of the soul to Christ. It is a fundamental view of his that among all the books of scripture, the Song of Songs is the book where the most profound divine mysteries have been articulated in a

mystical way; s. *expProv*, 22.

130. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

131. Indeed Origen is regarded as he who first articulated the phrase *οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε οὐκ ἦν* (there is no when he was not) [Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, c.27 (M.25.465)] which afterwards became famous as the pivotal phrase of the defenders of Christian orthodoxy against the Arians.

132. *Gen*.1,26. *Cels*, V, 37.

133. *commJohn*, 19, VI.

134. s. *Cels*, V, 37.

135. *Eph*.3,10.

136. *commJohn*, 1, XIX; *Cels*, IV, 40.

137. s. *Cels*, VI, 77.

138. *Princ*, II.2.2.

139. *commJohn*, 1, XX.

140. *commJohn*, 5, V.

141. *commJohn*, 1, XVII; 1, XX; 32, XVIII; *Cels*, VI, 44.

142. *commJohn*, 32, XVIII.

143. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

144. *commJohn*, 1, XVII.

145. *Cels*, VII, 37.

146. *Cels*, VII, 7. also *commJohn*, 2, XVII.

147. *selGen* (in *Gen*. 11,1); *Dial*, (BGF, v.16, pp.367-8); *frOs*.

148. *expProv*, 7. This is one more answer of Origen's to those who attribute him a notion of "eternity of the world" even in a mode of existing in wisdom; what Origen stresses is that the "theoremata" and "reasons" existing in wisdom are "made" and they are not beginningless; that is to say, this "made" wisdom is clearly distinguished from the Son of God himself who timelessly is with the Father; we discuss this question in §4 of this chapter.

149. *expProv*, 8.

150. *ibid*.

151. *commProv*, 1.

152. *selPs*, 22.

153. *selDeut*, (commenting on *Deut*. 8,3).

154. *commJohn*, 1,XXXIV; 2, XVIII.

155. *selPs*, 22.

156. *commJohn*, 1,XXXIV.

157. *commJohn*, 1, XXVIII.

158. *commJohn*, 1, XXIV.

159. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI.

160. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

161. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI.

162. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

163. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI.

164. *commJohn*, 1, XX; 1, XXXI.

165. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI.

166. *commJohn*, 1, XIX, quoting *John* 1,4; s. also, *commJohn*, 1, XIX; *frJohn*, II.



167. *fr John*, II. It is quite characteristic that the term "rationality" (λογικότης) in Greek has the same root with the term "Logos" (λόγος). This expresses better Origen's notion that "rational creatures" (λογικά) are called so because of their "participation" to Logos of God; s. *infra*.

168. Obviously the term "before" is used in a loose sense just for the sake of articulation of a certain notion. For strictly speaking "before" makes no sense in a reality which is timeless. This is an expressional problem which Origen himself faced and articulated; s. *supra*.

169. *commJohn*, 1, XX. 170. *John*, 1, 1. 171. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

172. *commJohn*, 1, IX. This point is very significant, because it actually constitutes an essential difference of Origen's notion of "conceptions" of Christ from any Platonic notion of "ideas". In Plato, Ideas have a real and undisputable existence as beings *in themselves*. This means that Ideas have an *essential* being -in fact it is in the Ideas that the essence of things is to be found.

By contrast, Origen clearly states that the "conceptions", which he speaks of, have not any being of their own as ideas. It is particularly indicative of his notion that he explains that "the fact that we discern conceptions in the saviour should not embarrass anyone; for no one should think that we do the same think in essence" (μηδείς δέ προσκοπέτω διακρινόντων ημών τάς ἐν τῷ σωτήρι ἐπινοίας, οἰόμενος καί τῇ οὐσίᾳ ταυτὸν ημᾶς ποιεῖν) [*commJohn*, 1, XXVIII].

Thus, the "conceptions" do not have any essential existence in themselves neither do they introduce any essential distinction in the son of God. They are simply products of human apprehension of Christ and nothing more than that.

173. s. *infra*. 174. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

175. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII. 176. *ibid*. 177. *ibid*. 178. *ibid*.

179. *commJohn*, 2, XXVIII. 180. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII.

181. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

182. *ibid*. Particular attention should be paid to a point which is delicate: Recalling our remarks in n.76, it should be pointed out that the affirmation that life *became* pertains to creaturely life, as Origen himself explains (*commJohn*, 2, XIX). The conception of Christ as "life" is not beginningless by virtue of the fact that creaturely life is not beginningless.

183. *fr John*, II. 184. *ibid*.

185. *commJohn*, 20, II. 186. *fr John*, XIII; s. *infra*.

187. *Princ*, II.2.2. 188. *Princ*, IV.4.4.

189. *commJohn*, 1, XXXIV. 190. *ibid*. 191. Eph.2,3.
192. Phil. 3,21. 193. Gen. 8,21. 194. *commEph*, p.404.
195. Cf. H. Crouzel: *Origène et la connaissance mystique*, Paris, 1961; Also R.P. Lawson, *Origen: The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, London, 1957; (Introduction).
196. *Dial*, (BGF, v.16, p.373). 197. *ibid*.
198. Cf. Mark 4,11; Matt. 13,36; similarly, *Cels*, III,21.
199. I Cor.5,12. 200. *Dial*, (BGF, v.16, pp.373-4.).
201. *selPs*, 109.
202. *commJohn*, 20, II. What Origen means by "mystery" is stated in *Cels*, 5, XIX. He there refers to "secret truths ... which are not appropriate for the simple-minded and for the ears of the common crowd". Thus a "mystery" (quoting I Cor.50) is a "word ususally applied to the deeper and more mystical doctrines which are rightly concealed from the multitude".
203. *homJer*, 16,1. *Cels*, VII, 38.
204. *Cels*, IV, 40. 205. *expProv*, 7.
206. P. Plass gives a quite erroneous account of Origen's authentic views on this subject. Determined as he is to read Neoplatonic views in Origen's thought he asserts that in Origen there are "no less than four different levels: God, Wisdom, minds before the fall, minds fallen into time/space/ matter" [*op. cit.*, p.13]. He thus, like so many others, regards God as the Plotinian One, and Wisdom as the Plotinian Mind etc. and thinks that it is only the names which change. On the assertion about the relation of God to Wisdom we have already commented. With regard to the implied world "before the fall", this is wrong, too, as we extensively argue in this chapter as well as in Appendix A.
207. *Dial*, (BGF, v.16, p.374).
208. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.
209. This is what G. Butterworth does in *FP*, p.253, n.4, where he thinks that Origen's conception that God created two universal natures, namely the incorporeal and the corporeal one, might be compared to what is stated in Plato's *Phaedo*, 79A. One, however, does not have to study too painstakingly that point of Plato's work in order to see that Origen's affirmations have nothing to do with that; s. *infra*.
210. *commJohn*, 13, XXV.
211. Cf. *Johanneskommentar*, GCS, 4, p.249; also C. Blanc, *Commentaire sur S.*

*Jean*, III, p.112. We think that the text at this point could be restored thus: "Αλλ' οὐχ ὁρώσιν <οἱ τοιαύτα ῥέχοντες> ὅτι παντός <τοῦ ὁμοουσίου συγγενές τὸ εἶναι τὸ αὐτό> καὶ τῶν αὐτῶν δεκτικόν' εἰ δέ ἐδέξατο τὸ πορνεύσαι ἢ πνευματικὴ φύσις, ὁμοούσιος οὕσα <τῇ ἀγεννήτῳ θείᾳ φύσει ὅσα> ἀνόσια καὶ ἀσεβὴ ἀκολουθεῖ τῷ ῥόγῳ τῷ κατ' αὐτοὺς περὶ Θεοῦ οὐδὲ φαντασιωθῆναι ἀκίνδυνόν ἐστιν.". The word *συγγενές* which we propound here as well as the syntax of *συγγενές* with Genitive is familiar to Origen and it is found in the same work more than once; Cf. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX, the expressions *συγγενούς εβδομάδος* and *συγγενούς διαστήματος*.

212. G. Florovski, *Creation and Redemption*, Greek tr. by P. Pallis, Thessaloniki, 1979; p.52.

213. G. Florovski, *Aspects of Church History*, pp.45ff.

214. *De Genesi ad Litteram*, I, PL XXXIV, p.221. G. Florovski has written an entire work (*Studia Patristica*, VI, 1962, 36-57, repr. in *Aspects of Church History*, pp.45-73.) in order to prove that Athanasius' conception of creation is the counter-point of Origen's views. What he actually did, however, was to expound Origen's views of creation (being himself unconscious of this fact) attributing them to Athanasius and having the illusion that they are contrasted to what he has taken as views of Origen. We discuss this point in chapter 5, §3. The same thing happens in this case.

215. G. Florovski, *Creation and Redemption*, pp.53 and 310.

216. *commJohn*, 19, XX.

217. Gal.2,20.

218. Eph.5, 31-32. On this conception of Origen we discuss in chapter 5.

219. *Cels*, VII, 69.

220. *commJohn*, 2, XIV.

221. *ibid*.

222. We give a detailed account of this notion of Origen's in chapter 5.

223. *Cels*, VI, 65.

224. *ibid*.

225. *commJohn*, 32, III; 20,XIX.

226. We say "adumbrating" as the term "portraying" cannot actually be used, since nowhere Origen tries to explicate his view of the fall.

227. *Cels*, VI, 43. In his translation of *Cels*. (p360, n.11) H. Chadwick regards this affirmation of Origen as an allusion to Plato, *Phaedrus* 246B, C. It is Origen himself, however, who, in *Cels*, too, explicitly refers to Plato and indeed to that point of *Phaedrus* in order to state that his conception of the fall has nothing to do with the Platonic views in general and particularly as stated at that point of *Phaedrus*'s. also p. 86.

228. Ezek., 28,11-19. *Princ*, I.4.4.

229. *Princ*, I.4.4. Here we remind again the awkwardness in treatment of temporal notions by Rufinus. He speaks of the "one's" fall "*at some later time*" (*ibid*, our italics.). Although the fundamental conception is undoubtedly Origen's, there is nothing of Origen's caution and scrupulousness in treating this crucial point, as it appears in his writings in Greek.

230. *commJohn*, 32, XVIII.

231. *ibid*. It is again significant to note that Origen says that this "one" like the others, was "made"; he also says that "while he was in divine reality, he fell". *ibid*.

232. Cf. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV. On the ontological significance of "names" in Origen's thought, we discuss in chapter 5.

233. "arhonton" means "of those who hold the arhe", that is "the power"; but as here "arhe" means the wisdom itself, the term "arhonton" does not mean anything more than "those who are in arhe", namely "in wisdom". From this follows that the term "arhonton" is not any particular definition of this "one"; it simply indicates that, "before" the fall, this "one" was *in* the wisdom.

234. *commJohn*, 20, XXII.

235. *Cels*, VI, 44.

236. He means Ezekiel, alluding to the passage in Ez. 28,19, which follows.

237. *Cels*, VI, 44.

238. *Cels*, VI, 44.

239. Cf. *Cels*, VI, 43; also VI, 44. It is quite significant that once more the scrupulous Origen uses the verb κατακοιουθησάντων which is the Past participle of the verb κατακοιουθῶ and means "follow down"; in this way his notion that the world is "down" in respect of God's timeless eternity is again clearly denoted; s. also, *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

240. *Cels*, VI, 43. We discuss this notion of Origen about the world later in this chapter.

241. *commJohn*, 1, XVII; also *Cels*, VI, 43.

242. *Cels*, VI, 43; also, VIII, 25.

243. John,8,44.

244. *commJohn*, 20, XXV.

245. *ibid*. We discuss the conception of this reality in chapter 5, too.

246. *commJohn*, 19, XX.

247. *commJohn*, 1, XVII.

248. *selGen* (commenting on Gen. 11,7); also *commJohn*, 5, V.

249. *Princ*, VI.6.2., II.1.3., III.5.4., III.6.3., III.6.8. Cf. *selPs*, 117.

250. *Princ*, I.4.4.

251. s. also, *Dial*, where Origen speaks of the state before the fall as an "immaterial and superior to any bodily hypostasis (ἀυλον καὶ κρείττον πάσης σωματικής υποστάσεως. (BGF,16,374,16).

252. Cf. I Pet.2,5. *Cels*, VIII, 19 and 20.

253. *Cels*, VIII, 20.

254. *Cels*, VIII, 19.

255. s. *supra*.

256. *Cels*, VI, 44. Indeed, one might pose the following question: How is it possible to speak at the same time of both, namely of not existing any notion of "distinction" whatever and of "one" who committed sin and fell? How the notion of "non-distinction" is compatible with that of "one"? On this question Origen has avoided to elaborate. However he has made some very significant remarks which are discussed in chapter 5 in relation to his conception of "restoration" from the fall, namely his conception of the eschatological perspective of the world.

257. Gen.3,21.

258. *Cels*, IV, 40. Here Origen quotes Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246B, C; s. also *Cels*, VIII, 53.

259. Gen.2,23.

260. *selGen*, (commenting on Gen. 3,21).

261. s. also chapter 5.

262. *Princ*, I.5.3.

263. *ibid*.

264. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII.

265. s. *infra*.

266. Ps.,103,24.

267. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

268. *Cant*, 2.

269. *homJer*, 1, 10.

270. *frMatt*, 11.

271. *selPs*, 32. The terms, as distinguished here, have not this meaning universally throughout Origen's work. What is important is the distinction itself which he makes. These terms are involved and contrasted just because they are found in the scriptural passages on which he comments and articulates this notion. Thus it is possible, at another point to use the term γένεσις meaning the spatio-temporal reality of the world; and indeed he does so in *frJohn*, XIII. The main point however is the *distinction* between the two creations, namely the *providential* and the *actual* one.

272. *selPs*, 32.

273. Ps.103,24. *commJohn*, 1, XIX. This point should not be misunderstood. This "substance" suggests the "nature" of rational creatures, such as human nature -and not the individual substance. For in the above stated passage, Origen is quite

explicit that the substances of *individuals* came into existence only with the actual creation.

274. Prov.8,22. *commJohn*, 1, X.

275. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

276. *frMatt*, 11.

277. *selPs*, 32.

278. Job 10,8; Ps.118,73.

279. Quoting Heb.5,11.

280. *Cels*, IV,37.

281. *deOr*, XXVII, 8.

282. *ibid*.

283. Although, at this point, Origen makes no explicit reference to any philosophical school, the definitions of "essence" that he propounds here actually pertain to those schools of thought.

284. *Cels*, VI, 64.

285. *commGen*, 1.

286. *commJohn*, 19, VI.

287. *Cels*, VII, 38.

288. *Cels*, VI, 64.

289. *Origène, Traité des Principes*, II,25, n.23.

290. We discuss this expression, found in *Phil*, in chapter 4.

291. *deOr*, XXIII, 5.

292. *Cels*, VI, 64.

293. *commJohn*, 1,XIX.

294. In chapter 5 we suggest that a comparison of Origen's thought to modern existentialism would be of great interest. As regards this topic, it is well known that it has been a major one of controversy among existential philosophers, once J.P. Sartre asserted that the substance of a human being is *posterior* to its existence. However a detailed discussion on this topic is out of our scope.

295. We speak of "human nature" as an example and just because Origen himself provides an account of the meaning of creation of man according to Genesis. However, the same statements can be made about the rest of rational creatures. (Cf. *commJohn*, 1,XIX). For, as we discuss later in this chapter, Origen's world comprises a number of ranks of life, of which "human" is only one among many.

296. *deOr*, XXVII, 8.

297. *Cels*, IV, 66.

298. *Princ*, III.6.7.

299. *Princ*, III.1.13.

300. H.C. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", From *Man and Time*. Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks, vol. 3, p.75.

301. Irenaeus *Adversus haereses*, I,5,6.

302. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*, II,16,74,1.

303. *selPs*, 38.

304. *selPs*, 117. In Origen's works the term *γεγονότα* (or *γινόμενα*) is

always used to refer to what has been created by God; Cf. *frLuc*, 58. *frMatt*, 212. s. also chapter 2.

**305.** *Princ*, IV.4.1. also *commJohn*, 20, XVIII. Origen's notion of the world as being *out* of God is very significant for his conception of time and particularly for the *raison d'être* of time. This point in his thought is discussed in chapter 5.

**306.** *commJohn*, 13, XXV. Here Origen rebukes Heracleon who asserted that creaturely incorporeal nature is *homousios* to God.

**307.** John 17,14-16.

**308.** Cf. John17,24.

**309.** *Princ*, II.3.6.

**310.** *Princ*, II.2.2. The expression "to have been produced from them or after them" shows that Rufinus had not grasped the exact views of Origen on the question of the substance of individual rational creatures. However it is also obvious that the (non-extant) original Greek text at this point quite clearly must have excluded the notion of this substance existing without any beginning.

**311.** *Princ*, I.7.1.

**312.** *FP*, p.81, n.1.

**313.** *Cels*, VII, 37.

**314.** *Cels*, VII, 7.

**315.** *Cels*, VI, 64. On the significant distinction between the notions of "not seen" and "invisible" in Origen's thought we discuss later in this chapter.

**316.** *Princ*, I.3.3.

**317.** *Cels*, IV, 25; III, 75; I, 8; III, 39; IV, 40; IV, 83. *exhMar*, XLVII; *commJohn*, 13, XLII; 19, IV; *frJohn*, XLV. *expProv*, 7.

**318.** *commMatt*, 17, 34.

**319.** *Princ*, VIII.8.2.

**320.** *Princ*, I.7.3. Whether or not Origen considers heavenly bodies as rational beings is question which we discuss in Appendix B, since the notion of *motion* in Origen's thought is related to our topic and the subject has been not properly treated by J. Oulton and H. Chadwick.

**321.** *Princ*, III.5.4. On this particular subject we discuss in chapter 2, in the light of Greek passages affirming this fundamental conception of Origen's.

**322.** *Princ*, VIII.8.2.

**323.** s. *infra*, §5 in this chapter.

**324.** *Cels*, III, 42.

**325.** *commJohn*, 2, XVII.

326. *Cels*, VI, 71; VII, 38; s. also *Princ*, IV.2.7.
327. "we should use the metaphor of bodily clothing..."; *Princ*, II.3.2.
328. *commJohn*, 13, L. 329. *Princ*, IV.2.7. 330. *Wis*.11,20.
331. *Princ*, II.9.1. 332. *Princ*, IV.4.8. 333. *Princ*, IV.4.8; our italics.
334. *Princ*, I.5.3. 335. *Princ*, I.7.3. 336. *Ez*.18,4.
337. *selEz*, 18. 338. *Cels*, VI, 60.
339. *commGen*, 3, (commenting on Gen. 1,16-18).
340. *commGen*, 3, (commenting on Gen. 1,16-18); *commJohn*, 1, XXXVIII; also *Princ*, I.5.4; IV.4.3.
341. *commGen*, 3, (commenting on Gen. 1,16-18). 342. *ibid*.
343. *commGen*, 3, (commenting on Gen. 1,16-18) 344. *ibid*. 345. *ibid*.
346. *commJohn*, 6, LVII.
347. *commMatt*, 13,20. The text is extant only in Latin as, in this point, there is a small gap in the original Greek text; nevertheless there is no question about the validity of the Latin translation at this point, because in fact an account of the various meanings of cosmos follows in the ensuing Greek text.
348. *commMatt*, 13, 20.
349. The expression "the system of heaven and earth" (τὸ σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς) is quite often used by Origen. This expression is actually a Stoic one; Cf. SVF, II,168,11: II,169,39: II,192,35.
350. *commMatt*, 13, 20; s. also *Princ*, I.5.5.
351. *commMatt*, 12,27; 13, 20.
352. *Cels*, VI, 49. 353. *Cels*, VI, 49. 354. *Princ*, II.3.6.
355. *commMatt*, 12, 27. 356. *Princ*, II.3.6.
357. *Is*.III. 17, *Is*.III.24, *Wis*.XVIII.24.
358. *I Cor*.VII.31; *Princ*, II.3.6. 359. *Matt*.V.4.
360. *Princ*, II,4,3. 361. *Princ*, II,3,6.
362. *Cels*, V, 4. 363. *Cels*, III,42; V, 4.
364. *homJer*, 14, 17.
365. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII; Cf. *Cels*, 6,59.
366. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII.



367. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

368. *frMatt*, 51.

369. *selPs*, 21.

370. *selPs*, 138.

371. *expProv*, 3.

372. *Cels*, IV, 57. s. also, *Cels*, III, 51-52.

373. *commJohn*, 1, XXVI.

374. *frJohn*, CXXXIX.

375. *commJohn*, 13, XL. At this point there are two obviously small gaps in the original text. E. Preuschen in the edition *Der Johanneskommentar* of the Prussian Academy propounds this restoration of the text: "ἐν τοῖς πρὸ τῆς «εἰς τοὺς» αἰθερίους τόπους «οδοῦ» χωρίοις" (*Origenes Werke*, 4, p.266). We think that instead of οδοῦ, which does not make much sense here, it is ἀναβάσεως that should be adopted, as it is a usual expression of Origen's. Thus the text should be read thus: "ἐν τοῖς πρὸ τῆς «εἰς τοὺς» αἰθερίους τόπους «ἀναβάσεως» χωρίοις"; Cf. C. Blanc, *Origène, Commentaire sur S.Jean*, III, p.174, n.2.

376. *selPs*, 5.

377. *commJohn*, 2, XI; s. *infra*.

378. *Cels*, IV, 25.

379. ὁ γὰρ λόγος τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχων ἀπὸ τοῦ παρὰ θεοῦ λόγου οὐκ ἐὰ τὸ λογικὸν ζῶον πάντῃ ἀλλότριον νομισθῆναι θεοῦ. *ibid*.

380. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI; *Cels*, I, 62.

381. *frJohn*, XVIII.

382. *Cels*, IV, 65.

383. *commMatt*, 14, 7.

384. *commMatt*, 13, 31.

385. *excPs*, 17.

386. s. chapter 4, 81.

387. *Cels*, VI, 21. Indeed Origen held a notion which was "more mysterious" as he perceived these particular worlds being different *in quality* and not in terms of geometrical distance. s. *infra*.

388. Gen. 28, 12-13.

389. *Cels*, VI, 21. Origen here alludes to Philo's work *de Somniis*.

390. *Princ*, II.3.6.

391. John, 17:14, 16.

392. *Princ*, II.3.6. It should be noted, however, that in *Princ* the notion of a radical chasm between God and the world is extremely vague, in contrast to the

clarity with which this notion is explicated in the texts in Greek. Thus the Latin rendering of *Princ* may well lead to miscomprehensions as to whether certain passages refer to the higher rank of life of the world or to the divine reality.

**393.** This point is discussed in chapter 4 in relation with Origen's conception of eternal life.

**394.** *Princ*, II.3.6.

**395.** *Princ*, II.3.6.

**396.** Cf. Clement, *Epistula ad Corinthios*, XX, 5,8: "The unsearchable places of the abysses and the unfathomable realms of the lower world are controlled by the same ordinances ... The ocean, which men cannot pass, and the worlds beyond it, are ruled by the same injunctions of the Master." (tr. by Kirsopp Lake; Loeb Classical Library, *Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1, p.45.).

**397.** *selEz*, 8.

**398.** *Princ*, II.3.6.

**399.** *Princ*, II.1.1; s. also, *Princ*, II.2.2.; II.3.4.; II.1.4.; II.9.1.

**400.** *Princ*, II.4.3; also *commJohn*, 1, XXVII; 2, XXII; 19, XX.

**401.** *Princ*, II.4.3.

**402.** *Princ*, II.4.3. He presumably refers to those who dwell in the "lower parts of the earth", according to Eph.IV.9.

**403.** Phil.II.10.

**404.** *Princ*, I.6.2.

**405.** *Princ*, I.5.1. The scriptural passages on which Origen grounds this notion are the following: Heb.1,4; Col. 1,16; Eph. 1,21; Also Matt., 25 and Rev. 12,7 (for the expression "angels of the devil"); John,12,31; 14,30; 16,11 (about the "prince of this world"); I Cor. 2,6 ("princes of this world") and also Eph. 6,12; Luke 7,21; 4,33 ("evil spirits" and "impure daemons"); Phil.2,10 (being "earthly" or "under the earth"); Deut. 32,9 (in order to consider "the reference to certain different classes, as when it is said 'the Lord's portion in his people Jacob, Israel in the cord of his inheritance' ") and Deut. 32,8 ("angels of God").

**406.** *commJohn*, 2, XIV.

**407.** *commJohn*, 1, XXXI.

**408.** Quoting Ps.135,2; Ps.49,1; I Cor.8,5.

**409.** Quoting Col.1,16; s. also *commMatt*, 17, 20.

**410.** *commMatt*, 13, 20.

**411.** *commMatt*, 17, 21.

**412.** *commJohn*, 1, XXXI; also *Princ*, I.5, 4-5. **413.** *Princ*, II.3.6; II.4.3.

**414.** *Princ*, III.1.1.

**415.** Cf.Col. 1,16-18. *Princ*, I.7.1.

416. *ibid*; s. also *Princ*, I.Pref.8-9; I,7,1; IV,3,15; *Cels*, VI, 64; VII, 46.  
fr *John*, XIII.

417. *Princ*, IV.3.15. The so-called Fragment 2 in Koetschau's edition is one of his interpolations in *Princ*, I.Pref.8, and reads thus: "The term "asomaton", that is incorporeal, is unused and unknown, not only in many other writings but also on our scriptures" - a passage from Antipater of Bostra in John of Damascus, *Sacra Parallela*, II.770; M.96.501.

418. *Princ*, II.3.6.

419. *selPs*, 23.

420. Col. I,15-16. IV.3.15.

421. Rom.,11,36.

422. *Princ*, IV.3.15.

423. *Princ*, I.1.6.

424. *Princ*, IV.4.1.

425. *Princ*, IV.4.1.

426. *Princ*, IV.4.5.

427. *Princ*, IV.4.4.

428. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

429. *Princ*, II.10.2.

430. *Princ*, II.4.3.

431. *Princ*, II.4.3.

432. *Princ*, II.3.6.

433. This physical structure is directly related to moral reasons, as we shall see in chapter 2, when we shall discuss his notion of "pre-existent causes".

434. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

435. *ibid*.

436. *Princ*, II.9.2.

437. *Princ*, II.2.2.

438. *ibid*. The expression "after a space of time" should be regarded in the context of what we have already stated about the awkward way in which the use of temporal terms appears in the *Princ*.

440. I Cor.15,44.

441. Cf. Luke 20,36: Matt.22I,8.

442. *Princ*, II.2.2.

443. *Princ*, II.3.3.

444. *Princ*, II.1.4.

445. R. Norris, like so many others, has taken for granted that what Origen perceives as "world" is an "order of rational spirits" (*op. cit.*, p.148) which exist eternally (pp.154-5). This is not a view of Origen's but a view attributed to him by those who approach his thought already prejudiced and determined to see it through the glasses of Platonism and Neoplatonism. The views of C. Bigg, G. Florovski, H. Crouzel, M.Simonetti, E. de Faye, and others, on this topic are quite the same; assertions made by them are discussed at other points of this work.

446. *commJohn*, 19, XX -commenting on John, 8,23.

447. *ibid*.

448. The comment on the Latin meaning of *καταβολή* as *constitutio* is obviously made by Rufinus; for Origen wrote in Greek, not in Latin. The remark of G.

Butterworth that the term καταβολή does not appear in John is wrong; for the term καταβολή does appear in John, namely in the passage John,17,24. Hence, his remark that this point is an addition of Rufinus (based on this mistaken assumption) is wrong, too. (*FP*, p.420, n.1). For Origen deals with the scriptural use of the term καταβολή in *commJohn*, too, as we point out in note 446. (s. *supra* ).

449. Eph.1,4.

450. *Princ*, III.5.4.

451. *Princ*, III.5.4.

452. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

453. *ibid*.

454. John,17,24. *ibid*.

455. Cf. Fragment 5, Koetschau from Justinian's, *libor* (Mansi IX.528) incorporated in his edition of *Princ*, in I.2.10. Also, Fr. 10 (from the same writing of Justinian's), incorporated in *Princ*, I.4.5.

456. *frLuc*, 34. *commGen*, 3 (commenting on Gen. 1,16-18.); *expProv*, 5. *commJohn*, 2,1; 2,11; 2, XIX; 20,XXII; *frJohn*, I; *frJohn*, CX and CXI.

457. Cf. *frLuc*, 34.

458. The very word *Αόριστος* (Past Tense) literally means "Indefinite".

459. *Origen: The Song of Songs. Commentary and Homilies*. tr. R.P. Lawson, p.146. Our italics. Certainly in English the verb is used in Present Perfect tense. But in the Greek text, on which Origen comments, the verb is in the Past tense. The passage *Cant*. 1,10 reads thus: "τί ωραιώθησαν οί σιαχόνες σου ως τρυχόνος, τράχηλός σου ως ορμίσκος;". The verb form which Origen points out is ωραιώθησαν.

460. *commJohn*, 2, XIX; *frJohn*, I; *homJer*, 9,4.

461. *frJohn*, I.

462. *ibid*.

463. *ibid*.

464. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

465. *ibid*.

466. *frJohn*, II.

467. *commJohn*, 1, XVII.

468. *expProv*, 16.

469. *commJohn*, 32, III.

470. *seIPs*, 21.

471. *seIPs*, 144.

472. *Cels*, II, 79.

473. *seIPs*, 54.

474. *expProv*, 1.

475. *seIPs*, 138.

476. *expProv*, 18.

477. *expProv*, 9. According to his fundamental view of the actual content of the "world", Origen always bears in mind that he refers to the entirety of ranks of life; this is why he refers to "rational creatures" (τά λογικά) and not just to human beings; Cf. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII; *frJohn*, II.

478. *seIPs*, 144.

479. See, for example, *se/Ez*, 16.

480. However, whether or not creation out of nothing is a biblical notion is a matter which does not enjoy unanimity. As R. Sorabji points out, an early Biblical account of God's creative power in the *Book of Job* 28 and 38 has been taken to mean that God put order into pre-existing chaos, rather than creating out of nothing. In the *Wisdom of Solomon* 11,17 it is stated that God "created the cosmos out of a formless matter" without saying whether that matter had a beginning. In 2 *Maccabees* 7,28, the reference to creation out of nothing can easily be reinterpreted (Cf. H.A. Wolfson, *Philo*, Cambridge Mass., 1947; vol.1, pp.302-3). Thus it has been asserted that neither in the Bible nor in the Jewish-Hellenistic literature is there a clear statement of creation out of nothing in a sense which can include a beginning of the material universe. In that case it is sustained that the view of creation out of nothing was invented by Christians in the second century A.D., in controversy with the Gnostics. Cf. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.194.

481. Yet even this view of Origen's has been challenged by scholars who attribute to him a "doctrine of eternal creation". R. Norris, for example, clearly implies that by this expression: "Origen feels it necessary to insist explicitly on the teaching that nonmaterial beings (or rather, *some* nonmaterial beings) must be classified as 'created'..." (*op. cit.*, p.149; his italics). In order to abide by his premise that Origen held a "doctrine of eternal creation" (*op. cit.*, p.154) he goes as far as to impugn what Origen so many times and explicitly states, namely that *everything* was created.

482. *commJohn*, 2, XIX. 483. *frJohn* I. 484. *commJohn*, 2,XIX.

485. *frJohn*, 1. 486. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

487. *frJohn*, 1; s. also *frJohn*, CXI.

488. *frJohn*, 1. 489. *commJohn*, 1, XIX. 490. *frJohn*, II.

491. We certainly use the terms here by convention; for the term "past" or "beginning" do not actually make sense in timelessness; what nevertheless we are enquiring here is whether Origen holds a notion about an "eternity of world" even if this "world" is expressed in terms of God's purpose to create it. For some scholars have alleged that even if one concedes that the worlds did not actually exist, they attribute to Origen a view of God as *beginninglessly* having decided to create. This is what G. Florovski did (*Aspects of Church History*, pp.45ff). What we assert here is that Origen does not hold such a notion.

492. *frJohn*, I. This "became" should be given particular attention; for it is the

same verb, in the same form, which Origen explicitly states that it denotes a previous nonexistence; s. *supra*.

493. *fr John*, II.

494. *fr John*, I.

495. Cf. J. Pépin, *Théologie cosmique et théologie chrétienne*, Paris, 1964; pp.502-6; C. Tresmontant, *La Métaphysique du christianisme et la naissance de la philosophie chrétienne*, Paris, 1961; pp.190-4; 319-26; 364; A.H. Armstrong, "Elements in the thought of Plotinus at variance with classical intellectualism", *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, (3, (1973), pp.13-22.

496. Cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 2.1.1; 2.30.9; 3.8.3. Christian writers later to Origen pointed out this distinction, too; Cf. Augustine *De Civitate Dei*, XI, 24: *Enarratio in Psalmum* 134, sermo 10; Thomas Aquinas *in Caelo* I, lectio 29, n.12.

497. *Timeaus*, 29E-30A; 41B; s. Pépin, *op. cit.*

498. *Enneads*, VI.8.9(44-8); VI.8.13; VI.8.15(1-10); VI.8.18(35-52); VI.8.21(8-19).

499. *Enneads*, V.1.6(25-7).

500. *Enneads*, II.9.3(1-18); II.9.8(21-7); III.2.2; 3.2.3(3-5); IV.8.6(12-13); V.1.6; V.1.7(37); V.3.16(1).

501. Later Platonists also attributed a notion of "will" to the Demiurge's creative act. Cf. Iamblichus *de Myst.* 3, 28; Proclus, *in Platonis Timaeum Commentarii*, (ed. E. Diehl, Leipzig, 1903-6); 1.362; 1.371, 4.

502. *comm John*, 19, XXII.

503. *ibid.*

504. *Enneads*, III.2.1-2; V.1.6.

505. *Enneads*, V.1.6; V.1.7 (2 and 37); V.4.1.

506. It should be pointed out, nevertheless, that here Plotinus expresses his conception of the relation of the secondary reality, namely Intellect, to the One. It is to the One creating the Intellect that Plotinus denies the role of will [V.1.6(25-7)]. He regards it as something like the light which surrounds the sun [V.1.6; V.1.7(2 and 37); V.4.1)]. Some would be tempted to assimilate this notion to the relation of the Father to the Son in Origen's thought - in fact a vast number of scholars (some of them mentioned in this work) have done this. To prove how erroneous such a view is demands a treatise of its own. However we only note here that those who make these misleading assertions contradict themselves. For they also use the so-called Fragment 32, incorporated by P. Koetschau in his edition of *Princ*, where it is explicated that "the Son *was born out of the will* of the Father". To what extent this passage (from Justinian's *lib Or*, Mansi IX.525)

expresses Origen's authentic views demands, as we said, a work of its own. We only make the juxtaposition in order to show that those who want to give credit to Justinian's testimonies (and they are exactly those who attribute "Neoplatonism" to Origen) grossly contradict themselves. For it becomes clear that, even at this point, the very notion of the Father's *will* radically contrasts Origen's thought (as presented by Justinian) from that of Plotinus'. Whereas Plotinus *denies* any role of will to the One creating the Intellect, Origen is presented to *affirm* a role to the will of the Father begetting the Son. At any rate, Plotinus's affirmation of a *necessity* in the creation of lower levels of reality (namely the visible world) renders the contradistinction of the Neoplatonic conception of creation from that of Origen's even stronger.

507. R. Sorabji's assertion that the basic idea of "conditionality" in the creation of the world is originated in Augustine is not correct. Cf. *op. cit.*, p.241.

508. *deOr*, XXIII, 5.

509. *commJohn*, 19, VI; *Cels*, VII, 38. That before creation "essence" was "uncreated" too is stated in *commGen*, 3.

510. *Cels*, VI, 64.

511. *frMatt*, 357. The opinion that "essence" was uncreated before creation is stated in *commGen*, 1 (commenting on Gen.1,12); ...τόν θεόν, ἀγέννητον εὐρόντα τήν οὐσίαν...

512. G. Florovski, *Creation and Redemption*, p.53.

513. G. Florovski, *Creation and Redemption*, p.310, n.12.

514. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, I; cited in G. Florovski, *Creation and Redemption*, p.53.

515. *frJohn*, I.

516. *ibid.*

517. *ibid.*

518. *John*, 1,4. *frJohn*, II.

519. *frJohn*, I.

520. This articulation, however, should be regarded in the context of Origen's statements about the expressional difficulty to articulate truths which involve timelessness. Cf. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

521. Fragment 5 Koetschau, in *Princ*, I.2.10, and Fragment 10 Koetschau, in *Princ*, I.4.5.

522. Those who attribute this view to Origen allege that he held a notion of some "spiritual world" before time; regardless of any other argument against such an allegation, the fact is that in Origen's thought the categories of "spiritual" and "world" when used together do not make any sense; the only exception is Origen's

term "intellectual world" (νοητός κόσμος) used in a certain context and explained there by Origen himself that this term means nothing but the son of God himself, the term "world" being here just a metaphor; s. Appendix A.

523. *expProv*, 9.

524. *ibid*; s. also *frJohn*, I. A. Hamman is one more scholar who develops his assertions on Origen's conception of creation on the erroneous premise that Origen held a doctrine of "eternity of creation"; Cf. A. Hamman, "L' Enseignement Patristique sur la Création", *Revue des Science Religieuse*, 42 (1968), pp.101-4.

525. Heb.1,3.

526. Wis. 7,26.

527. Prov.8,25.

528. *homJer*, 9, 4. s. also *commJohn*, 1, XXIX.

529. *Princ*, II.2.1.

530. *Princ*, I.2.2.

531. *ibid*., Here Origen alludes to the Stoic notion of *καταληπτική φαντασία*; s. *infra*.

532. He refers to the Incarnation.

533. Phil.2,6.

534. Phil.2,7. *frMatt*, 3.

535. Here is how R. Norris tries to "explain" what, "from the point of view of a Platonist" (namely Origen), he sees as a "contradiction", namely how is it possible that something is both incorporeal and generate. All he does is to regard that the term "beginning" has the meaning which Origen (explicitly and so many times) attributes to the relation between the Father and the Son. In order to stand by his false premise of the "doctrine of eternal creation" (*op. cit.*, p.154) which he attributes to Origen, Norris (*op. cit.*, p.151) goes as far as to attribute to Origen also a notion which so strongly the Alexandrian theologian rejected. This is one more point where it becomes clear that one erroneous presupposition leads to a series of others -and Norris' work is full of such (s. other notes about that work).

536. *expProv*, 7.

537. C. Bigg takes for granted that Origen held a notion of eternity of the world (*The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, pp.240-2). His opinions about Origen's thought in that book are based upon this false premise. Therefore it could take a very extensive discussion to refute these opinions. We have already discussed how mistaken he was in rendering Origen's views of the "conceptions" of the Son (*op. cit.*, p.210, n.1; s. *supra*, n.76). Bigg failed to grasp that whereas Wisdom and Logos *were* timelessly conceptions of the Son, the rest of them *became*, due to the very fact that the world was brought into being out of non-being. Whether this mistake was prior or posterior to his impression that Origen held a Platonic



doctrine of eternity of the world, does not matter. The fact is that H. Bigg compiled a work based on fundamental miscomprehensions of Origen's thought.

538. *selPs*, 2.

539. *expProv*, 1.

540. *frJohn*, 1.

541. *ibid*.

542. *selPs*, 32.

543. C. Bigg, *op. cit.*, p.296.

544. This was also held by eclectic Platonists such as Plutarch of Chaeronae; Cf. *Philopoemen*, I,10.1: Σωκράτης καί Πλάτων χωριστάς τῆς ὕλης οὐσίας τὰς ἰδέας υπολαμβάνει ἐν τοῖς νοήμασι καί ταῖς φαντασίαις τοῦ θεοῦ, τουτέστι τοῦ νοῦ, υφ'εστῶσας.

545. Cf. *De Opificio Mundi* 3E ff; 5C; 7B ff; 29C; *Legum Allegoriarum Libri*, 44A; *De Migratione Abrahami*, 404B (edit. Magney); also Cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 28A ff. cited in A.H. Chroust, "The meaning of time in the ancient world", p.61, n.370.

546. *De Opificio Mundi*, 2B; ap. Chroust, too.

547. *De Opificio Mundi*, I.33-35.

548. *De Aeternitetae Mundi*, 2.5; *De Specialibus Legibus*, 1.266.

549. *Princ*, III.5.1.

550. The assertion of R. Sorabji that Origen holds that there is an "intelligible world" which is "without beginning" is wrong. That the term "intelligible world" makes no sense in Origen's thought is discussed further in this chapter as well as Appendix A. Our discussion at this point shows also that the notion of creation "without beginning" is absolutely alien to Origen's thought. This pertains also to the providential creation. The "reasons" and θεωρήματα which are the outcome of that creation *had a beginning*. This is what has eluded R. Sorabji and hence his mistaken assertions that these creatures "have existed always" [Cf. *op. cit.*, p.251, n.111.].

551. *selPs*, 2.

552. *expProv*, 1. In this sense Origen here emphasizes that the term ἀρχή (beginning) may also mean "the cause of coming into being (Ἀρχή καί ἡ τινός ὑπόρξεως αἰτία).

553. *commGen*, 3.

554. In asserting that those two kinds of relation are virtually the same, R. Norris has made a serious mistake. Cf. *op. cit.*, p.151.

555. E. de Faye has grounded his work *De l' influence du Gnosticisme sur Origène* on two entirely mistaken assumptions. First, that Origen holds a notion of a "transcendent world" of spirits. That this is an erroneous assumption is discussed

also in Appendix A. Secondly, that Origen holds a "doctrine of eternal creation", an assumption quite erroneous, too, as our discussion here shows. The claims of Faye in this work, where he asserts an influence of the Gnostics on Origen, grounding these assertions on false premises inevitably lead him to conclusions which seriously distort Origen's authentic views. Cf. E. de Faye, "De l' influence du Gnosticisme chez Origène", *Revue de l' Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 87 (1923), pp.181-235.

556. *commJohn*, 2, XIV.      557. *Cels*, IV, 79.

558. *selPs*, 109.      559. *Cels*, IV, 79.      560. *ibid*.

561. *commEph*, p.404,219-223; also, p. 407,34-35.

562. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.      563. *expProv*, 8.

564. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.196.

565. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

566. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.310.

567. A further discussion on this particular topic is beyond our scope. However, the passage from *hamJer* quoted above is quite eloquent.

568. One can now see how wrong the assertion of R. Norris is, namely that one cannot think of God without thinking at the same time of the world. He asserts that "the doctrine of 'eternal creation' is, in Origen, a correlate of his understanding of the divine nature." (*op. cit.*, p.154). These are the views of G. Florovski, too (*Aspects of Church History*, p.49) and of a vast number of scholars, some of which have already been mentioned.

569. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.241.

570. R. Norris, *op. cit.*, p.149ff.

571. *loc. cit.*: Thus the problem of Norris is that although he postulates Origen as a "Platonist", yet he finds in him fundamental views which are not consistent with Platonism. However he does not put his premise in question. Instead, he tries to provide an answer (pp.149-152) in which alleges that Origen is not really an inconsistent Platonist. His allegation is that Origen did not hold that creation had a beginning and came into being out of non-being. Of course he is wrong as his premise of a world of "rational spirits" (p.150) existing without any beginning (p.154) is wrong, too. For the notion of "beginning" is too strong throughout Origen's works to be extinguished even through a miscomprehension. Certainly it is not a very apt comment to say that "Origen wants to have his cake and eat it", namely to assert that the "world of spirits" is without beginning and at the same

time to speak of "beginning". The simple answer here is that Origen does not hold any notion of any beginningless world whatsoever. Thus the comment of Norris applies rather to him himself. For he seeks on the one hand to maintain his assertion that Origen holds a "doctrine of eternal creation" (p.154) and on the other to sustain that this creation had a "beginning". Certainly it is not a "contradiction" of Origen's, but a profound miscomprehension of Norris.

**572.** The same happens with the conception of the relation between Knowledge and Virtue; s. chapter 4.

**573.** Cf. *Princ*, I.2.2.

**574.** *Princ* I.1.6; I.2.10; I.4.3-5. (This section is found in one MS only and has been obliterated from another. s. Koetschau's ed., p.65, n. on 1.8); II.5.2-3.

**575.** Such an argument can be found in Aristotle (*Physics*, 8.1, 252a11-19; *De Caelo*, 1.12, 283a11) in opposing the view that there could have been rest for an infinite period and then motion. Augustine's answer to a similar question (namely "what did" God do before creation) was that "He was preparing hell for people who pry into mysteries" (*Confessions*, XI.12). His actual answer to both questions is that there was no time before the creation (*Confessions*, XI.13; *de Genesi contra Manichaeos*, I.2.3; *De Civitate Dei*, XI.5-6). But this was but a mere repetition of an inspired view of Origen, already explicated in *commJohn*, 2,XIX, also in *fr John*, XIII, etc. -not to mention *Princ*, IV.4.1, a passage which acquires a totally different meaning regarded in the context of the fact that Origen *did not* hold any notion of beginningless of creation. In modern times this argument has been set forth by Leibniz in his famous exchange of five papers with Clarke; he developed his argument of "why not sooner?" in attacking the Newtonian opinion that time exists independently of change. However a further discussion on this point is beyond our scope. Cf. H.G. Alexander, *The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence*, Manchester, 1956; pp.26-7; 37-8; 75-7.

**576.** Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, 2.28.3; Augustine, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, I.2.3.

**577.** *Cels*, I, 21.

**578.** The scriptural passages, which Origen appeals to, are Ps.101,28 and Mal.3,6. It is remarkable that he uses the two of them in both passages and quotes them in the same order. It is obvious that the first mainly suggests the notion of God Himself whereas the second alludes to the fact that any notion about Him does not imply any alteration to God Himself. In his translation of *Cels*, H. Chadwick has translated the passage of Malachi,3,6 as "I change not" (*op. cit.*, p.21). We

understand that this is the English rendering of the scriptural οὐκ ἠλλοίωμαι, quoted by Origen. However, the verb is in the Present Perfect Tense and not in the Present Tense, so the passage means "I have not changed". For our topic it is significant to point out the difference, as the quotation is meant to suggest that eventhough God *decided* to create, there is no change or alteration that took place in God Himself. (Whether in the Hebrew text the verb is in Present Prefect Tense or in Present Tense, we do not know. What we know, however, is that in the Greek text the verb is in the form οὐκ ἠλλοίωμαι and this is what Origen quotes, too.).

579. *Cels*, VI, 62; our italics.

580. Cf. A.H. Chroust, "The meaning of time in the ancient world", *The New Scholasticism*, XXI (1947), p.21.

581. *Timaeus*, 30A.

582. *Sophist* 247 D; 248 C.

583. *Timaeus* 29 E ff.

584. *Princ*, III.5.3.

585. Cf. Chapter 3.

586. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX; s. also *commJohn*, 10, XLI.

587. Cf. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

588. *Cels*, VIII, 63.

589. *Cels*, VIII, 63. *Καταληπτική φαντασία* is a fundamental notion in Stoic epistemology: it means a perception of the mind which is regarded as true and no doubt can be entertained as to its truth. On the significance of it in Origen's thought we discuss shortly below (note 596).

590. In *Princ*, although not by the Stoic name, Origen alludes to this intellectual capacity in speaking about the atemporal ontological relation of the Father to the Son stating this: "God was always the Father of his only-begotten Son, who was born indeed from him and draws his being from him, but he is yet without any beginning, not only of that kind which can be distinguished by periods of time, but even of that kind which the mind alone is wont to contemplate in itself and to perceive, if I may so say, *with the bare intellect and reason*. Wisdom, therefore, must be believed beyond the limits of any beginning that we can speak or understand."; *Princ*, I.2.2.

591. *Cels*, I, 42.

592. Cf. *Enneads*, IV.4.1. On this point there is a particularly interesting article

by A.C. Lloyd: "Non-discursive thought -an enigma of Greek philosophy". *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 70 (1969-70), pp.261-74.

**593.** *Princ*, IV.3.15. There can be no doubt that this passage expresses Origen's authentic views. For this affirmation is the same, not only in conceptual content but also almost in letter with the above mentioned similar statement in *Cels*, 1, 42: ...λεκτέον 'οτι τήν πάσαν ιστορίαν, κόν αληθής ή, βούλεσθαι κατασκευάζειν ως γεγενημένην καί καταληπτικήν εμποιήσαι περί αυτής φαντασίαν τών σφόδρα εστί χαλεπωτάτων καί τών <έν> ενίοις αδύνατον. Similarly, in *Princ*, II.9.1, there is this expression: "Now ... let us ... contemplate the beginning of creation, *so far as it is possible for the mind to contemplate the beginning of God's creative work*". (our italics.). In view of our discussion, there could be no doubt that this expression renders Origen's authentic views.

**594.** Cf. *Enneads*, III.7.3.

**595.** This had already been stated by Plato, who concedes that any notion of "before" or "after" is possible only within time existent. s. *Timaeus*, 37 E ff; Cf. *Parmenides*, 156 A ff.

**596.** One would say, however: "But this is not plausible!". In saying this, he will have, quite unconsciously, already articulated the very definition of *καταληπτική φαντασία* according to Stoic thought. As a matter of fact, the Stoic conception is that "direct apprehension (*καταληπτική φαντασία*) is different from what is plausible" (*διαφέρειν δέ τήν καταληπτικήν φαντασίαν τού ευλόγου*) [SVF, I,141,5-6 and, again, in 15-16]. What seems to be "plausible" is subject to dialectics and, after a certain argumentation, this "plausible" could be rebutted. On the contrary, *καταληπτική φαντασία* is not susceptible of rebuttal whatsoever. (*τήν μέν χάρ [sc. καταληπτικήν φαντασίαν] αδιάψευστον είναι, τό δέ εύλογον κόν άλλως αποβαίνειν*) [SVF, I,141,6-7]. This means that "plausible" can be proven to be *untrue*, but what is apprehended through *καταληπτική φαντασία* could never be proven to be untrue. [Cf. SVF, II,29,39.]. This is why *καταληπτική φαντασία* was regarded as "criterion of truth" (*κριτήριον αληθείας*) [SVF, II,22,28-30.]. For, by definition, "*καταληπτική φαντασία* is what arises from what *really exists*, namely from what is true and it would never arise from what does not exist." (*φαντασία καταληπτική εστί ή από τού υπάρχοντος καί κατ' αυτό τό υπάρχον εναπομεμαχμένα καί εναπεσφραχισμένα οποία ούκ άν χένοιτο από μή υπάρχοντος*) [SVF,I.18,6-11; also in SVF, II,24,12-14; II,31,7; II,33,4]. So the truth apprehended through *καταληπτική φαντασία* is beyond "sensual perception" (*καί χωρίς τής κατά τάς αισθήσεις ενεργείας*) [SVF, II,24,11] as well as beyond

what seems to be "plausible" (διαφέρει τοῦ εὐλόγου) [SVF,I,141,5-6 and, again, in 15-16]. With respect to the problem of time we give this example: The celebrated Zeno's paradoxes of motion disputed the very possibility of a man to move at all. What is "plausible" and obvious was rebutted through dialectics and the discussion on such grounds goes on until our day (although it should not in the light of the development of Infinitesimal Calculus and the conception of relativity.).

The real meaning of καταληπτική φαντασία plays a crucial and decisive role in understanding Origen's conception of the non-beginninglessness of the world. It is certainly not incidental that, whenever he treated this most delicate question, he expressed (or, rather, *suggested*) his view by using the Stoic notion of καταληπτική φαντασία. This fact must be given a serious attention and painstaking study in order to comprehend Origen's conception of creation and its relation to God. In his view, these questions cannot be taught through words but can only be apprehended through direct apprehension. For the theological notions (τῶν θεολογουμένων ἐννοιῶν) which are used, being a *means* of expression, actually stand *between* human mind and God. (Cf. *fr. John*, XIII). It should be emphasized, however, that even "direct apprehension" is not regarded as an adequate intellectual function in order to comprehend these questions entirely. This comprehension is a *hope* (stemming from the promise of "seeing" God "face to face") pertaining to the eschatological reality and *only* to that reality. (*ibid.*).

**597.** That God has everlasting duration rather than atemporality was held by Aristotle; Cf. *Metaphysics*, 12.7, 1072b13- 1073a13. As regards Plato there is still controversy whether he regarded the Ideas as "everlasting" or "timeless"; for in his works the implications of duration and timelessness stand side by side and he offers no clear resolution; thus J. Whittaker in "The 'eternity' of the Platonic Forms" argues that Plato's notion of eternity is "everlasting duration". This is a view similar to F.M. Cornford's who interpreted eternity in Parmenides and Plato as "duration"; s. F.M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology*, pp. 98; 102. On the other hand, L. Taran regards Plato as the first atemporalist and so does M. Schofield; Cf. L. Taran, *Parmenides*, Princeton 1965, p.175; Malcolm Schofield, "Did Parmenides discover eternity?", *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 52 (1978), pp.243-66. Both the latter authors, unlike Plato, aver that in Parmenides eternity means "duration".

**598.** Quite unconsciously, Justinian, in *libOr*, speaks of God's "will" (τῷ βουλήματι) to create. It is obvious, however, that he had not the slightest idea of the serious implications that the notions of God's *will* has in Origen's theology. (Cf. Mansi, IX. 489). The pertinent passage was incorporated by Koetschau in his

edition of *Princ*, as Fragment 24 (in *Princ*, II.9.1). How absurd this act of Koetschau's is is argued in chapter 2 §1, at the point where we discuss Origen's conception about the relation of time to the notion of Infinite.

**599.** It is most regretable that the erroneous opinion, that Origen held a doctrine of eternal creation, has found a place in the excellent work *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* written by W. Windelband with the collaboration of H. Heimsoeth. In vol. I, ch.2 (pp.245-303) this opinion has been taken for granted. In fact Origen is singled out as "the only one ... who abided by the basic characteristic of Greek science and taught that the cosmic process is eternal." (p.297). No one could blame Wilhelm Windelband for adopting this view. He is not an Origen-scholar but a leading figure of the Neokantian School of Heidelberg. In this work he acts as a historian of Philosophy and he adopts prevailing opinions about the persons involved in his exposition. The fact, however, that this opinion about Origen has found a place in a History of Philosophy written by a respectable philosopher, is quite indicative of how current this erroneous opinion is among scholars.

**600.** *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

**601.** *frJohn*, I.

**602.** *ibid*.

**603.** *Princ*, IV.4.1.; s. also *commJohn*, 20, XVIII, and chapter 5.

**604.** *commJohn*, 20, XVIII. With his insistence on reading the philosophy of Neoplatonism into the works of Origen, R. Norris states that "the Logos appears ... as the first step 'down' from the One in the stream of existence" and he is "the expression of eternal Mind" (*op. cit.*, p.154). Origen never used these Plotinian categories. Beyond that, however, the assertion that the Logos is "existing down" in relation to God is just a miscomprehension by those who in all ways wish to attribute a Plotinian perception of the world to Origen. Our discussion in this section shows how wrong they are in regarding the Logos as being somewhere "lower" from God or "standing midway" (s. *infra*) between God and the world. The Logos *is and always was with* God in the divine timelessness.

**605.** We remind here that, in Origen's thought, the term "invisible" implies incorporeality and applies to the Trinity alone.

**606.** *John*, 1,26. *commJohn*, 6, XXX.

**607.** *commJohn*, 2, XV.

**608.** In Greek the word Logos means also "word" and "speech" and "instruction" and "preaching" and "teaching".

**609.** *John*, 12,48.

**610.** *commJohn*, 2, XV.

**611.** *commJohn*, 1, XXXVIII.

**612.** *Cels*, V, 24.

613. H. Chadwick, *Origen, Contra Celsum*, p.151.

614. *op. cit.*, p.151, n.4.

615. *Cels*, III, 34.

616. *frMatt*, 242.

617. *frMatt*, 3.

618. *selPs*, 109. s. also *frJohn*, CV.

619. *commJohn*, 2, IV; our italics. Once more we draw the attention of the reader on the manner in which Origen develops his arguments, namely the scrupulous linguistic analysis of scriptural passages. This analysis is based on a thorough knowledge of the temporal significance and implications of tenses of verbs. Origen was equally scrupulous himself in using verbs in the appropriate tenses, so that his statements express his conceptions in the most accurate and efficient manner. This is why we have regarded the painstaking study of his expressions as fruitful, in terms of indicating his authentic views.

620. *excPs*, 23; *selPs*, 23; *frJohn*, XLVI.

621. *frMatt*, 242 -quoting Matt.11,27.

622. *Princ*, IV.4.1.

623. *commJohn*, 20, XVIII. We agree with the interpretation of the English translator of the *Princ*, G.W. Butterworth who, in his introduction to the book, states that "rational beings ... are definitely outside the Godhead, as the Son and Spirit are definitely within.". Cf. *FP*, p. lv. We give a more detailed account of this conception of Origen in chapter 5.

624. *Princ*, II.9.2.

625. *Princ*, IV.4.2.

626. *frMatt*, 3.

627. *selPs*, 32.

628. *frJohn*, XIII.

629. *ibid*.

630. *ibid*. The assertion of J. Cheek that the state "before" the actual creation was not a timeless one is wrong. s. J. Cheek, *Eschatology and Redemption in the Theology of Origen*, Drew University, 1962, p.277. In his effort to identify Origen's conception of time to what O. Cullmann has asserted as "biblical view of time", Cheek falls into the mistake to attribute to Origen the doctrine of eternal creation; (Cf. *op. cit.*, p.534, n.15). On O. Cullmann's views of time we discuss later in this work.

631. *frJohn*, XIII.

632. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

633. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII.

634. *commJohn*, 19, XX.



## Notes to Chapter 2.

1. John Callahan, *Four views of time in Ancient Philosophy*, Connecticut, 1968.
2. J.Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, Cambridge, 1969; p.273.
3. Cf. R. Sharples (in collaboration with F.W. Zimmermann), "Alexander of Aphrodisias *On Time*", *Phronesis*, 1982.
4. *frMatt*, 487.
5. *ibid*. At this particular point, Origen uses the term "extension" not to denote a period of time, but a certain moment of it, namely the expected second advent of Christ, according to Matt.25,31; it is also significant to note that, in this passage, he refers to events as occurring "in" time (τά ἐν αὐτῷ).
6. *commMatt*, 15, 34.
7. *commMatt*, 15, 28.
8. Athenagoras, *De Resurrectione Mortuorum*, M.6.1005. M. Spanneut regards it as an indication of Stoic influence; Cf. M. Spanneut, *Le Stoïcisme des Peres de l'Eglise*, Paris, 1957; p.356; It is remarkable, however, that the author deems that the Stoic influence upon the early Christian writers does not go further than Clement of Alexandria.  
Besides, Origen's fundamental view on the essence of time is totally different from that of Philo's. For the latter clearly holds a Platonic conception of time and postulates that the divine life (αἰών) is "the archetype and model for time"; *Quod Deus Immutabilis Sit*, 6.32.
9. Justinus Martyr, Philosophus, *Confutatio quorundam Aristotelis dogmaticum*. M.6.1525D ff. The points to which we refer are 1525D, 1528B-C, 1529A, 1532C, 1533A etc.
10. *deOr*, XXVII, 13.
11. *deOr*, XXVII, 14. The same terminology, in the same context and in the same sense, as Origen's are echoed by John Chrysostom who speaks thus: πέντε ημέρας ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκίας κατέχεται τὸ πρόβατον (sc. before Passover) ... ἔπειτα θύεται ... πέντε διαστήματα χρόνου δηλοῦται ταῖς πέντε ταύταις ἡμέραις ἀπὸ Αἰὼν μέχρι συντελείας; *In pascha* 5.2; Cf. *ibid* 5.1; M.59.735ff. Also: τῆς ἐπιούσης ἡμέρας ... οὐκ οἶδας εἰ τὸ διάστημα ὀψεί; *Homilia in Matt.19.5*. The same term *διάστημα* was also used by Essaias Abbas in the expression ἀνῆλθωσεν ἐν ματαιότητι τὸ διάστημα τῆς ἡμέρας; *Orationes*, 10; M.40.1135B. Accordingly, Olympiodorus of Alexandria defines time thus: χρόνος μὲν ἐστὶ τὸ διάστημα καθ' ὃ πράττεται τι; *Commentarii in Ecclesiastem*, 3.1; M.93.508A.

12. *frMatt*, 102 II.

13. *selPs*, 22.

14. *Cels*, IV, 99. s. chapter 5.

15. The same preposition *διά*, is used in the passage stated above, namely in the expression *διά χρονικών διαστημάτων* as in *deOr*, XXVII, 14. Gregory of Nyssa is one of the first in the long series (s. *infra*) of Christian writers who employed this terminology of Origen: Cf. ἡ κτίσις πάσα τῷ τῶν αἰώνων διαστήματι παραμετρεῖται. *Contra Eunomium*; M.45.364D.

16. *commMatt*, 17, 24.

17. *ibid*.

18. *frMatt*, 227.

19. *commJohn*, 19, XX.

20. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.

21. *commJohn*, 1, XVI; "the with-many-significations of the voice; τό πολύσημον τῆς φωνῆς.

22. Prov.16,7.

23. I Cor. 15,25.

24. I Cor. 13,12.

25. I Cor.8,2.

26. Prov.16,7.

27. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.

28. The meaning of "salvation" is discussed later in this work, notably in chapters 4 and 5.

29. *commJohn*, 1, XVII.

30. The term *διάστημα* was widely used later, during the Arian controversy by both sides in the quarrel. Thus Alexander of Alexandria states that what was alleged by the Arians was that προηγείται κατ' αυτούς τῆς τᾶ ὅλα δημιουργούσης τοῦ θεοῦ σοφίας ἐκεῖνο τό διάστημα ἐν ᾧ φασί μή γεγενῆσθαι τόν υἱόν υπό τοῦ πατρός; *Epistula ad Alexandrum Constantinopolitanum*, 6; M.18.557A. In the orthodox statements against the Arians, the term *διάστημα* is used so frequently, that it sometimes appears as almost a synonym to "time". Thus Athanasius states: τό λεχόμενον ἐν τῷ ... ψαλμῷ πρὸς τόν υἱόν 'ἡ βασιλεία σου πάντων τῶν αἰώνων' οὐκ ἐπιτρέπει τίνα κἂν τό τυχόν διάστημα διαδοχίσασθαι ἐν ᾧ μή υπήρχεν ὁ λόγος. *Orationes tres adversus Arianos*, 1.12; M.26.37A.

Accordingly Basil of Caesarea states: ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, ὡς φατε (sc. Eunomians) τί ἦν ἐκεῖνο τό διάστημα; τίνα αὐτῷ προσηγορίαν ἐπινοήσατε; ἡ μὲν γάρ κοινῇ συνήθεια ἡ χρόνους ἡ αἰώσιν ἅπαν διάστημα υποβάλλει. *Adversus Eunomium*, 2.13; M.29.596B. He also speaks about the Sabellians and Arians οἱ χρονικοῖς διαστήμασι τοῦ μὲν πατρός τόν υἱόν, τοῦ δέ υἱοῦ τό πνεῦμα τό ἅγιον διατρούσι. *Liber de*

Quite expectedly, the term *διάστημα* in this case is used by him who was most influenced by Origen's thought, namely Gregory of Nyssa. We quote his statement, not only because the term *διάστημα* is remarkably frequently used, but also because here Gregory offers an account of his conception of time as an "extension":

Ο πρεσβυτέραν τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ ζωῆς τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς δογματίζων διαστήματι τινι τὸν μονογενῆ τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων θεοῦ πάντως διῴστησι· τούτο δέ ἡ ἀπειρον ... ἡ τισὶ πέρασι καὶ σημείοις φανεροῖς οριζόμενον. ἀλλ' ἀπειρον μὲν εἰπεῖν οὐκ εἰσὶν ὁ τῆς μεσότητος λόγος ἡ παντελῶς τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς τε καὶ υἱοῦ ἐννοιαν διαγράψει τῷ λόγῳ ... ουκοῦν ... ουδεμίαν ἔξει χώραν ἀπειρον ἐννοεῖν τὸ διάστημα, ἀλλὰ πεπερασμένῳ τινὶ κατὰ πάσαν ἀνάγκην τὸν μονογενῆ τοῦ πατρὸς διαστήσουσι ... ὁ λόγος οὗτος οὐκ ἐξ αἰδίου εἶναι τὸν ἐπὶ πάντων θεόν' ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τινος ὠρισμένου σημείου τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐσχηκέναι κατασκευάσει. ὁ δὲ λόγῳ, τοιούτῳ ἐστι ... τὸ μετὰ τι γενόμενον διὰ τοῦ πρὸς εαυτοῦ διάστημα ορίζει καὶ τὴν τοῦ προὔποννουμένου ὑπόστασιν. Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, 1; M.45.357D-360B.

31. *commJohn*, 6, LVII. For the translation of οὕτως as "methodically" s. L. and S., p.1199.

32. Cf. SVF, II,39,31.

33. Cf. *commEx*.

34. *commJohn*, 32, III.

35. This point is discussed in chapter 5.

36. SVF,II,165,20-22.

37. *Enneads*, III.7.8. We have in general followed the translation of A.H.Armstrong, but with some substantial changes: Thus, we translate "διάστασις" as "extension" and not as "distance" which does not mean διάστασις but απόστασις; also the expression ὅσον γάρ means "for as long as"; Armstrong's translation as "for the same space" would create confusion as he obviously means "space of time" just where Plotinus makes the crucial distinction between space and time. Also, the expression τὴν τῆς ηρεμίας διάστασιν does not mean "interval of rest" but "the dimension of rest" according to Plotinus' conception of time as a "dimension of life"; s. *infra*.

38. *Enneads*. III.7.10.

39. Cf. SVF 2.329-35 and 521. Sextus Empiricus, *adv. Math* 10.218; Cf. J.M.Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, ch.9; Pasquale Pasquino "Le statut ontologique des incorporels", in Jaques Brunschwig (ed.), *Les Stoïciens et leur logique*, Paris, 1978.

40. Cf. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.23.

41. SVF,II,166,4-10. ἐτι δὲ κακεῖνο ζητῆτόν ἀπὸ τῶν προειρημένων ὅτι πολλοῦ

δεί τοιούτον υπονοήσεται τόν χρόνον ὁ Πλάτων οἷον οἱ ἀπό τῆς Στοάς υπέλαβον ἢ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Περιπάτου πολλοί, οἱ μὲν κατ' ἐπινοίαν ψιλήν αὐτόν συνιστάντες ἀμενηνόν καί ἐσχίστα τοῦ μή ὄντος· ἐν γάρ ἦν τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀσωμάτων ὁ χρόνος, ὃ δὴ καταπεφρόνηται παρ' αὐτοῖς ὡς ἀδρανὴ καὶ οὐκ ὄντα καὶ ἐν ἐπινοίαις υφιστάμενα ψιλαίς· οἱ δὲ συμβεβηκός τῆς κινήσεως λέγοντες.

42. V. Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, p.197.

43. J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p.287.

44. J.Rist, *op. cit.*, p.283-8.

45. At this point, our analyses in the Introduction about the change of *existential attitude* during the period discussed, should be recalled.

46. I Cor.8,13.

47. *expProv*, 10. Aristotle had given a definition of *αἰών* which reads thus: "τό τέλος τό περιέχον τόν τῆς ἐκάστου ζωῆς χρόνον ... αἰών ἐκάστου κέκληται"; *De Caelo* 279a25. The comparison of the two definitions and uses of the term *αἰών* shows how admirably has Origen transformed the notion according to the conception of time which he himself established through the terminology introduced by him, as is discussed below.

48. *selPs*, 60.

49. In Greek the term for "noun" is "ousiastikon (ουσιαστικόν)" which means a name for the "ousia" ("essence") of a thing; what Origen does here is not to use a noun ("ousiastikon"), that is he does not directly depict the "essence"("ousia") of time. Why he does so will be discussed later in this chapter.

50. Ps.2,7.

51. *commJohn*, 1, XXIX; Cf. the passage from *hamJer* quoted in chapter 1,§4.

52. *commMatt*, 15, 31.

53. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orationes*, 38.8; M.36.320B. αἰών γάρ οὔτε χρόνος, οὔτε χρόνου τι μέρος ... ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἡμῖν ὁ χρόνος ... τοῦτο τοῖς αἰδίοις αἰών, τό συμπαρακτεινόμενον τοῖς οὖσιν.

54. John of Damascus, *De fide orthodoxa libri quattuor*, 2.1; M.94.861B. τό τοῦ αἰώνος ὄνομα πολλύσημόν ἐστι ... αἰών γάρ λέγεται ... ἢ ἐκάστου τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζωῇ ... πάλιν ... ὁ χιλίων ἐτῶν χρόνος· πάλιν ... ὅλος ὁ παρών βίος, καὶ αἰών ὁ μέλλων, ὁ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἀτελεύτητος ... πάλιν οὐ χρόνος, οὐδέ χρόνου τι μέρος ... ἀλλὰ τό συμπαρακτεινόμενον τοῖς αἰδίοις ... ὅπερ γάρ τοῖς ὑπὸ χρόνον ὁ χρόνος, τοῦτο τοῖς αἰδίοις ἐστὶν αἰών.

55. Origen is quite clear in defining *αἰών* as a "natural system" (σύστημα

φυσικόν), namely a purely *worldly* reality. s. chapter 4.

56. *commMatt*, 12, 6. He refers to the "apperceptions" (θεωρήματα) of wisdom.

57. John, 1, 26. *commJohn*, 6, XXX.

58. We make the contrast between "time" and "space-time" only for the sake of the analysis; the separation is not an actual one, it cannot be an actual one, and the distinction between those two is but an intellectual abstraction.

59. Eph. 2, 2.

60. *commEph*, p. 403.

61. *expProv*, 10.

62. Eph. 1, 7-8.

63. *commEph*, 239, 37-41.

64. In this case αρχή, alludes to the wisdom itself and, therefore, it has a non-temporal meaning.

65. Here the term αρχή has obviously a temporal significance, alluding to the beginning of time.

66. s. *supra*.

67. This is denoted by the preposition *παρά* in the term παρ-ακολουθούν.

68. SVF, II, 165, 4-9. As we saw above, this is a point on which Plotinus criticizes the Stoics, namely because they do not define if this "parakolouthema" is "either later or contemporary or earlier" (*Enneads*, III, 7.10).

69. *De Opificio Mundi*, 1, 26-7: πρεσβύτερον δ' αποφαίνεσθαι τοῖς πάντας φιλοσόφους.

70. SVF, 165, 10-12.

71. There was only the verb παρεκτείνω, Cf. L. and S. p. 1334 and *supra* 115.

72. 163 A.D. -Περὶ Χρείας Μορίων: "συμπαρεκτεινόμενον ὅλω τῷ μήκει τῆς ράχεως".

73. *Meditations*, 7, 30: συμπαρεκτείνειν τὴν νόησιν τοῖς λεγομένοις.

74. *Enneads*, III.7.13

75. *Enneads*, III.7.11.

76. This actually was a problem for the Stoics, namely whether time should be considered as a body or not and, subsequently, whether it should be regarded as a "being" or not.

77. G. Florovski: *Creation and Redemption*, p. 50.

78. Cf. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, V. 5, PL. XXXVI, 325: "factae itaque creaturae motibus coeperunt currere tempora; unde ante creaturum frustra tempora

requiruntur, quasi possint inveniri ante tempora tempora ... potius ergo tempora a creatura, quam creatura coepit a tempore; utrumque autem ex Deo" (Thus created beings begin to run <moving> into time; hence it would be in vain to search for time before creation, as if it were possible to find time before time ... so it is more likely that time began from creation than creation from time; yet both <derive> from God).

Also in *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, J.2. PL XXIV, 174,175; *De Civitate Dei*, XI, 6, PL xli, 321: "quis non videat quod tempora non fuissent, nisi creatura fieret, quae aliquid aliqua motione mutaret ...?" (Who does not see that time would have never existed unless creation had come into existence, which by some movement could change something or other?) and in p.322: "procul dubio non est mundus factus in tempore, sed cum tempore" (There is no doubt that the world was not created in time, but along with time). Also in *Confessiones*, XI,13, PL XXXII, 815-816 et passim. [Cf. P. Duhem, *Le Système du Monde*, II, Paris, 1914, p.462ff.

**79.** Cf. διαστηματική τινη παρατάσει συμπαρεκτείνεται (sc. ἡ κτιστή οὐσία); *Contra Eunomium*, M.45.933A. Following Origen's articulation on the presence of the Logos in the world, he also states: ἰδίόν ἐστι τῆς θεότητος τό διὰ πάντων ἡκεῖν καί τῇ φύσει τῶν ὄντων κατὰ πᾶν μέρος συμπαρεκτείνεσθαι; *Oratio Catechetica*, M.45.80D. Referring to the aeons as time he again sticks to Origen's own words, speaking of τὴν διαστηματικὴν τῶν αἰώνων παράτασιν; *Contra Eunomium*, 12; M.45.1064A. Following Origen in the sense of "beginning" (ἀρχή) in Gen. 1.1, as referring to the providential creation he states that ἡ γὰρ 'ἀρχή' παντός διαστηματικοῦ νοήματος ἀλλοτρίως ἔχει; *Apologia in hexaëmeron*, 8.; M.44.72A. Echoing Origen's view that God is the "cause" of creation in no sense of any temporal causality whatsoever, he speaks of God as αἰτίαν ... παντός διαστηματικοῦ νοήματος υπερκειμένην; *De infantibus qui praemature abripiuntur*, M.46.172C. Again he refers to the generation of the Son exactly as it was portrayed by Origen and uses his master's own terminology: μηδέν εἶναι ... ὁ ματαξύ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα συναφείας εὐρίσκεται, μή διαστηματικόν τι νόημα; *Contra Eunomium*, 4; M.45.661B.

**80.** Cf. ὅπερ ἡμῖν ὁ χρόνος ... τοῦτο τοῖς αἰδίοις, αἰών, τό συμπαρεκτεινόμενον τοῖς οὐσιν οἷόν τι χρονικόν κίνημα; *Orationes*, 38.8, M.36.320B.

**81.** Cf. τῇ ἐαυτοῦ αἰδιότητι συμπαρεκτεινομένην ἔχει τὴν πατρότητα; *Adversus Eunomium*, 2.12; M.29.593B; *ibid*, 2.13 (M.596B). Also, ὥστε ὅλη σχεδόν ἀνθρώπου γενεά τὴν ἐκ τοῦ μίσους ἀρχὴν συμπαρεκτείνειν; *Epistulae*, 204.1; M.32.745A.

**82.** Cf. ὁ θεός τοῦ χρόνου τῆς ζωῆς αὐτῶν υπετέμετο' ἵνα μή εἰς χρόνον μακρόν παραμένοντες, συμπαρεκτείνωνται τῇ κακίᾳ; *Commentarius in Isaiam*, 26.16;

M.81.496ff. Here Theodoretus follows a meaning of *συμπαρεκτεινόμενον* as in Origen's *commEph*. 1.8: ἀντιφλοιστούμενον καὶ συμπαρεκτεινόμενον κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν; (Fr. IV, p.239).

83. Cf. συμπαρεκτείνεται ἀνθρώποις ὁ βίος ἐν ἐνῆαυτοῖς, ἐν μηνὶ ... τούτοις ἄρα ἐχρήν καὶ ἡμᾶς συμπαρεκτείνειν τὰς ἐναρέτους ἐργασίας; *De temperantia et virtute centuriae ad Theodulum*, 2.58; M.93.1529D ff.

84. The following passage is strikingly repeating Origen's own words and was used by Athanasius in his attack against Arianism: Τὰ ... κτίσματα ... διαστηματικὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι ἔχει ... ὁ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγος οὐκ ἔχων ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι ... ἦν αἰεὶ; *Orationes tres adversus Arianos*, 2.57; M.26.268C. What Athanasius uses here is not only Origen's conception of the relation of the Father to the Son, but also Origen's terminology of temporal notions.

85. Cf. τῇ ... ἀπειρία συμπαρεκτείνων σου τοῦ ποθοῦντος τὴν κίνησιν; *Opuscula theologica et polemica*, M.91.9A.

86. Cf. τῇ τοῦ σώματος ἡλικία συμπαρεκτείνειν τὰ ἐαυτοῦ; *Scholia de incarnatione*, 13; M.75.1369ff.

87. Cf. τῷ παντὶ αἰῶνι συμπαρεκτεινομένην ... τὴν τιμωρίαν; *Homiliae in Genesim*, 27.10; M.53.23ff.

88. Cf. τὰ ... θεία θελήματα ... τῇ θείᾳ ἀπειρία συμπαρεκτεινόμενα; *Commentarii in Proverbia*, 4,14; M.87.1256D.

89. Cf. αἰὼν οὐ χρόνος ... ἀλλὰ τὸ συμπαρεκτεινόμενον τοῖς αἰδίοις, οἷόν τι χρονικὸν κίνημα καὶ διάστημα; *de fide orthodoxa libri quattuor*, M.94.864. This is the same terminology used by Origen in *commJohn*, 1, XXIX.

90. SVF,II,165,20-22.

91. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

92. *commJohn*, 2, I.

93. *Princ*, IV.4.2.

94. *selPs*, 54.

95. *commJohn*, 2, X.

96. *ibid*.

97. *commJohn*, 2, XIV.

98. *selPs*, 76.

99. *commMatt*, 15, 31.

100. *selPs*, 60.

101. *deOr*, XXVII, 16. Here the term αἰὼν has a temporal meaning because it is used in a context of mainly speaking of time; indeed, at that point of *deOr*, Origen ponders upon the meaning of the term "today" as in the Lord's Prayer. Yet this temporal sense is not the only meaning of αἰὼν; it has also a spatial meaning, which will be discussed in chapter 4.

102. *commEph*, p.403, 170- 184; s. also, 16,101, 5-8. It is important to note

that Origen uses the term "aeons (τούς αἰώνες)" in the Plural whereas the predicate applied to that term is in the Singular, namely "creature (κτίσμα)"; it is again obviously that the term "aeons" is used instead of "time" and this is why the predicate is in the Singular.

103. *enarrJob*, 32.

104. *Meditations*, VI,37; VII,1; VIII,1; IX,35 and 37; X,27; XI,1; XII,26.

105. *Meditations*, II,14; VII,19; IX,28.

106. *Meditations*, V,13; VI,15; VII,25; IX,19; X,7.

107. *Meditations*, VII, 67, and cf. X,21.

108. *Meditations*, V,33; X,17 and 34; XII, 7 and 32.

109. *commMatt*, 17, 33.

110. s. also *Cels*, V, 60; *commJohn*, 2, XXIV.

111. *commJohn*, 2, X.

112. *selPs*, 54.

113. *commJohn*, 1, XVII.

114. *expProv*, 16.

115. O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, p.73.

116. The expression "contamination" appears as a favourite one to H. Puech. Cf. "Gnosis and Time", p.52. O. Cullmann prefers to name Greek thought as "danger". Cf. chapter 4.

117. In spite of the fact that O. Cullmann's allegations (in *Christ and Time*) about time have been criticized by a number of scholars (discussed later in this work), this point has not been noticed. In the ensuing chapters we shall have the opportunity to show that O. Cullmann's thought is not original at all. And this, not only his assertions about Christ as a center of history are but a faint echo of Origen's thought. But also we prove that, in treating crucial and fundamental points, Cullmann's thought is deeply a "Greek" one.

118. *op. cit.*, p.154.

119. *op. cit.*, p.231.

120. *Cels*, VII, 46.

121. Probably this is a point which has never been forgiven by those who regarded themselves as authoritative exponents of Christian faith.

122. G. Florovski, *Aspects of Church History*, p.84.

123. *op. cit.*, p.234.

124. *ibid.*

125. *selPs*, 54.

126. *ibid.*

127. *selPs*, 138.

128. *selPs*, 41.



129. Cf. S. Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics*, London, 1959; p.104.
130. Wis.11,20.
131. *Princ*, II.9.1.
132. *Princ*, IV.3.12.
133. *Princ*, IV.4.8.
134. *Princ*, IV.4.8. Omnis igitur creatura intra certum apud eum numerum mensuramque distinguitur, id est uel rationabilium numerum uel mensuram materiae corporalis.
135. *Princ*, IV.4.1. Cetera uero, que sunt extra trinitatem, in saeculis et in temporibus metient sunt.
136. *Princ*, III.1.23.; III.6.6.
137. *frMatt*, 22.
138. For the Stoic view of time as continuum, cf. SVF, II,164,23-25.
139. SVF,117,19; 166, 1 and 8.
140. SVF,II,117,18-23.
141. SVF,II,164,27.
142. SVF,II,164,26-30.
143. SVF,II,164,23-25. As we shall assert, later in this chapter, the latter is an Origen's view, too.
144. SVF,II,165,37-43.
145. SVF,II,117,42-43.
146. J.Rist, *op. cit.* p.280.
147. SVF,II,166,4-10.
148. speech (τό λεκτόν), the void (τό κενόν), space (χώρος), time (χρόνος) [SVF,117,18-23].
149. SVF,II,117,5-6.
150. See S3 in this chapter about the kinds of motion according to Origen's thought.
151. SVF,II,117,20-22.
152. SVF,II,117,40-43.
153. *Cels*, VIII, 49.
154. *expProv*, 10.
155. *expProv*, 16.
156. *expProv*, 2.
157. The term *αδιάστατος* can be found at the following points of the *Enneads*, in the discussion about time and eternity; III,7-13; III.7.3; III.7.6; III.7.11; III.7.13.
158. *Enneads*, III.7.8.
159. *Enneads*, III.7.11.
160. *Enneads*, I.5.7.
161. Cf. Marguerite Harl, *Origène et la fonction revelatrice du Verbe Incarné*,

162. *Enneads*, III.7.10.

163. *Enneads*, III.7.11.

164. *Enneads*, III.7.11.

165. *Enneads*, III.7.11.

166. *Enneads*, III.7.13; also, III.7.11.

167. *Enneads*, III.7.11.

168. These are not the only differences; Origen's conception of "aeon" is fundamentally a "natural" one (s. *selPs*, 5 and chapter 4), whereas, in Plotinus' view, "aeon" is the timeless eternity. Shortly below we discuss on Plotinus' views in as much as they are related to this section of our work.

169. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

170. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

171. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

172. What the nature and the actual content of "end" is, will be discussed in chapter 5.

173. *Cels*, IV, 99.

174. Gregory of Nyssa faithfully follows Origen in the distinction between spatio-temporal reality as one "contained within dimensions" as opposed to the "dimensionless" divine reality (we discuss this topic later in this paragraph): τῆς σωματικῆς καὶ διαστηματικῆς φύσεως ... as opposed to ... ἡ νοερά τε καὶ ἀδιάστατος φύσις; *De anima et resurrectione*, M.46.48B; similarly in *De hominis opificio*, 23.3; M.44.212A. The reader should not Gregory's use of the term *νοερα* in its proper sense, as it is discussed in Appendix A.

This Gregory's adherence to Origen's terminology is particularly striking in *Contra Eunomium*: αὕτη (sc. created being) διαστηματικὴ παρατάσει συμπαρεκτείνεται, καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ τόπῳ περιειρχομένη, ἐκείνη (sc. divinity) υπερεκκρίνεται πάσαν διαστήματος ἐννοιαν ... οὔτε ἀρχὴν οὔτε τέλος προσίεται ... οὐ διαστηματικῶς ἐκτινος εἰς τι τῇ ζωῇ διοδεύουσα; *Contra Eunomium*, 12; M.45.933B; *ibid.* 1064C.

175. *homLuc*, 1.

176. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.123.

177. *ibid.*

178. Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium*, 1.359-64 (M.45.364); 1.370-1 (M.45.368); 1.685-9 (M.45.461-4); 2.459 (M.45.1064C-D) 8.5 (M.45.796A); 9.2 (M.45.809B-C); also *hom. in Eccl.* 7, (M.44.729C-D); *in Hex* (M.44.84D). On Gregory's view, s. H. von Balthasar, *Presence et pensée*, Paris 1942, pp.1-10.

179. R. Sorabji also includes the definition of time by Basil of Caesarea among these "fuller" accounts. On this he obviously follows an erroneous view of J. Callahan, on which we discuss later in this paragraph.

180. We shall give one example of thorough ignorance of Origen's thought. In the

article "Gregory of Nyssa and the Cappadocian Conception of Time", (*Studia Patristica*, 117 (1976), pp.199-222) B. Otis actually follows J. Callahan's views of the conception of time in either Gregory of Nyssa or Basil of Caesarea, as discussed shortly below. It is strikingly obvious, however, that Otis has but a vague, distorted and, at any rate, indirect knowledge of Origen's thought. We shall not comment on the view that Origen's thought was but a Christian version of Platonism; and views such as that Origen regards the Son as "creaturely" [p.332] are just unworthy of being commented on. We only note how erroneous is to argue that the use of terms *διάστημα* and *διάστασις* used for time itself "first comes into the Christian vocabulary with Methodius' critique of Origen" [p.336]. And he further notes: "The point of importance is that before the Cappadocians, *διάστημα* is used in a negative sense (as in Methodius) ... It is not used as an essential and inalienable mark of all creatures. But it is clear that the importance of time is brought out by the abandonment of Origen's eternal creation". [p.336, n.1] The reader can judge for himself how much the author of the article is ignorant Origen's views. He certainly is unaware that Methodius in his "critique of Origen" was but using Origen's own notions. Further, he does not know that what he calls "Cappadocian conception of time" has two aspects: First, a mainly "objective" view of time, held by Basil. Secondly, a mainly "psychological" one, held by Gregory. Both of them originated in Origen and both appear in Augustine. The author further claims that Origen does not actually distinguish between "time" and "eternity" ("his system makes little of the difference" he alleges). In fact, however, Origen's distinction between divine timelessness and worldly time is far more sharper than it is in Gregory of Nazianzus, for example. For in the latter *αἰών* is adopted in a sense which might be taken as a "time of God" [Cf. M.36.320B; *ibid.* M.45.4 (628C)] whereas in Origen there is no room for such vague ideas, exactly because time in itself has a certain and crucial *raison d'être* (s. chapter 5).

We have made this extended note for two reasons. First, because we shall not comment upon this particular work again. Secondly, to quote an example showing the appalling extent to which Origen's thought has been grossly distorted, and how his conception of time is entirely ignored. In fact, not only Origen is arbitrarily attributed ideas which are exactly the opposite from those that he really held. But also the views of later Christian writers who just adopted Origen's conceptions are presented as an "answer" to Origen!

181. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.117.

182. *Cels.* IV, 60.

183. We shall later argue that Origen expressed this inner feeling of

"space-time" by the term "aeon". Cf. *selPs*, 5.

184. *Cels*, VIII, 49.

185. As we discuss later in this chapter, Origen holds a notion of relativity as far as perception of time is concerned, either regarded from God or from beings of other ranks of life.

186. Cf. *homJer*, 12, 10; also, *selPs*, 60.

187. *selPs*, 41. Origen here employs the Aristotelian terms "δυνάμει" and "ἐνεργεία" as in Aristotle's "Metaphysics" 1047b,31, 1051a,5 et.c.

188. *selEz*, 16.

189. *expProv*, 18.

190. *frJohn*, I.

191. *selPs*, 144; the same terminology is also used in *selPs*, 9 and *selPs*, 15.

192. *selPs*, 76.

193. J. Callahan, "Basil of Caesarea: A new source of St. Augustine's theory of time", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 63 (1958), pp.437-54.

194. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.94-95.

195. *op. cit.*, p.248.

196. *op. cit.*, p.290, n.14.

197. *op. cit.*, p.438.

198. For what he regards as a "difficult question" he cites the work by H.I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*, Paris, 1949, pp. 27-46, 631-637.

199. *op. cit.*, p.440.

200. *op. cit.*, p.450.

201. The points which we make in this section of our work and which show the extent to which Augustine's thought was indebted to that of Origen's have eluded B. Altaner in "Augustinus und Origenes", *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 1950, pp.15-41.

202. *De haeresibus*, XLIII (Migne, PL, XLII); s. also chapter 5, §1.

203. *Adversus Eunomium*, I,21. χρόνος δέ ἐστὶ τὸ συμπαρακτεινόμενον τῇ συστάσει τοῦ κόσμου διάστημα, ὃ πάσα παραμετρεῖται κίνησις, εἴτε ἀστέρων εἴτε ζώων εἴτε οὐτινοσούντων κινουμένων, καθὼς ῥέχομεν ταχύτερον ταχύτερον ἢ βραδύτερον ἕτερον ἑτέρου' ταχύτερον μὲν τὸ ἐν ἐλαττονὶ χρόνῳ πλείον διάστημα μεταβαίνον' βραδύτερον δέ ἐν πλείονι χρόνῳ κινούμενον. ὃ δέ ἐπειδὴ ἐν χρόνῳ οἱ ἀστέρες κινούνται, χρόνου αὐτοῦς εἶναι δημιουργοὺς ἀποφαίνεται.

204. *ibid.*

205. J. Callahan, *op. cit.*, p.444.

206. Callahan, *op. cit.*, p.447.

207. In *commJohn*, 1, XXIX.

208. *selPs*, 117.

209. *op. cit.*, p.445.

210. *op. cit.*, p.446.

211. Callahan, *op. cit.*, p.447 and 450.

212. Callahan, *op. cit.*, p.447.

213. Augustine held that time, as a *distentio animi*, has three aspects, namely, memory, attention and anticipation, without which past, present and future can have no meaning. s. chapters 27,28 of the *Confessions*.

214. Callahan, *op. cit.*, p.450.

215. *selEz*, 16; *expProv*, 18; *expProv*, 28.

216. This point provides an answer, too, to what Callahan regards as a "serious historical problem in relating Augustine to Gregory", a problem to which R. Sorabji's hesitant suggestion (s. *supra*) does not certainly solve, as he himself concedes. There was no immediate relation of Gregory with Augustine but it was Origen's thought that exerted its influence upon both Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine.

217. *selPs*, 76.

218. *selPs*, 9; *selPs*, 15; *selPs*, 144.

219. *expProv*, 18; *expProv*, 28; *Princ*, III.1.13. At that point Origen states that it is only God who has such a knowledge, alluding to his conception of God as omniscient.

220. P. Plass, "The Concept of Eternity in Patristic Theology", *Studia Theologica*, 36 (1982), p.13.

221. Cf. *supra*, particularly the point where Origen's statement that the term "day" does not mean "the course of the sun" (τόν δρόμον τόν ηλιακόν). (16,101,5) is discussed.

222. s. §3 in this chapter.

223. *Confessions*, XI.26.

224. Origen's references are not altogether inadequate -but Augustine depended on the Latin versions of his works; and we do not know if he read the entirety of Origen's relevant references on the question. As we emphasized in the Introduction a study of the *entirety* of Origen's works is necessary, exactly because his view of time imbues his entire work and cannot be found as a whole in any particular

work devoted to this topic.

225. Cf. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, 165ff.

226. s. chapter 5.

227. *De Civitate Dei*, XII.16.

228. This theory had already been offered in two works straddling the *Confessions*: *De Genesi ad litteram liber imperfectus* III.7-8 and *de Genesi ad litteram*, V.5.12; the mental movements of the angels are described in *de Genesi ad Litteram* IV.22.39 and *De Civitate Dei*, XI.7.

229. The Stoics held that time is infinite to both directions, namely to past and future. (SVF, II, 164, 20-22) and so did Aristotle. Cf. Introduction.

230. *Princ*, II.9.1. This text is preserved only in Latin and it is this to which Koetschau has deemed the Fragment 24 to be an equivalent of. Our ensuing discussion will show that this section has nothing to do with Origen's conception of the Infinite with respect to God.

231. Mansi IX, 489 and 525.

232. Incorporated by Koetschau in *Princ*, II.9.1.

233. Fragment 38 Koetschau (Mansi IX, 525).

234. Incorporated by Koetschau in *Princ*, IV.4.8.

235. *seIPs*, 144.

236. *Cels*, III, 77.

237. *deOr*, XXVII, 16.

238. *seIPs*, 144.

239. *expProv*, 18.

240. *frLuc*, 79; *commMatt*, 14, 9.

241. A.H. Armstrong - R.A. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, London, 1960; pp. 9-15.

242. *Princ*, III.5.1-2. Part of this passage (namely §2ff, i.e. from "If, however..." to the end), as well as the ensuing paragraph (III.5.3) should be considered with caution as it is most likely that they constitute interpolations of Rufinus, as we have argued. The point which the reader should draw from this passage is the relation between infinity and comprehensibility and God. In expounding this argument Rufinus had a vague idea of Origen's conviction that the world is finite - but not because God could not comprehend what is infinite. As our analyses will show Origen holds that God *does* comprehend what is infinite. His conviction about the finiteness of the world stems from his conception of *prophecy* and, in the final analysis, from his conception of time - as we discuss in chapter 3,

§3. The main argument is that if the world is beginningless, *foreknowledge*, as such, makes no sense. If the world is endless, *fulfilment* of *prophecy* and *promise*, make no sense either. Since these categories profoundly determine Origen's conception of time, he argues that the world *must* have a beginning and an end. (s. chapter 3, §3). In the passage quoted in this section, the expression "the world had a beginning and is expecting an end" is undoubtedly Origen's. The rest of the text is Rufinus' who had only limited comprehension of Origen's conception of the relation between Infinity, duration of the world and God. This is why this text (like all interpolations of Rufinus) is articulated in an equivocal, vague and diffident manner -namely in a way which is in stark contrast to Origen's style and manner in his writings in Greek.

243. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.185-6.

244. SVF, II,170,27-36.

245. The citation of Wallis is from Nemesius' *On the Nature of Man*, ch. 38 (SVF, II,190, 10ff.)

246. *op. cit.*, p.185-6.

247. We have already argued that this constitutes a reason for a lot of Rufinus' miscomprehensions; some of them will be discussed further in this work.

248. Dan.,42.

249. *commMatt*, 13, 1.

250. *ibid.*

251. *Cels*, IV, 67.

252. *seIPs*, 9; *seIPs*, 15; *seIPs*, 144.

253. Cf. *seIPs*, 54.

254. *seIPs*, 144.

255. The expression "contemplation of made things" is quite usual in Origen; s. also *expProv*, 19.

256. *seIPs*, 144.

257. *seIPs*, 9.

258. *seIPs*, 15.

259. *deOr*, XVII, 14.

260. *Cels*, IV, 69.

261. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX.

262. *frLuc*, 50.

263. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.61ff.

264. *op. cit.*, p.73.

265. *op. cit.*, p.63.

266. S. Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics*, London, 1959; p.89.

267. *Physics*, VI,Ch.9.

268. S. Sambursky, *op. cit.*, p.89.

269. SVF, II,165,39.

270. SVF, II,158,15-19 and 164,23-26. This was an Aristotelian view, too; s. Introduction.

271. *commMatt*, 15, 18.

272. I Cor.15,52.

273. *frLuc*, 79.

274. Philo, too, held that the six days of creation indicate no time but an order of thought; Cf. *De Opificio Mundi*, 1.26-7.

275. *commMatt*, 14, 9.

276. We translate the term "αθρόως γεννηθισομένην" as "taking place all at once"; this expression in this meaning is also found in Aristotle, *Physics*, 186a15.

277. *commMatt*, 14, 9.

278. That is, about the non-duration of the judgement; *commMatt*, 14,10.

279. *frJohn*, LXXXVIII.

280. Yet Origen knows that this is just an inaccurate expression; this is why he uses the expression "ὡς ἓνος εἰπεῖν" which we translate as "practically", following Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*, but the exact meaning of this expression is "I say so yet I use a inaccurate expression".

281. It is characteristic of a certain conception that in Greek the term for geometrical "point" and for "moment" is the same, namely στιγμή.

282. *frMatt*, 487.

283. *frJohn*, I; *frJohn* CX.

284. Is.26,20.

285. *homJer*, 12, 10.

286. SVF,I,26,11-12.

287. *commMatt*, 15, 31.

288. *deOr*, XXVII, 13.

290. SVF, II,166,8-10; Cf. A.A. Long, "Language and thought in Stoicism" in his anthology *Problems in Stoicism*. An account of the ancient arguments about the reality of time has been given by R. Sorabji in "Is time real? Responses to an unageing paradox".

291. H.C. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", p.83.

292. *op. cit.*, p.61.

293. Cf. J.M.E. McTaggart "The unreality of time", *Mind*, n.s. 17 (1908), pp.457-74, revised in his *The Nature of Existence*, London, 1927, (vol.2, ch.3).



294. Cf. Hans Reichenbach, *Elements of Symbolic Logic*, New York, 1948.
295. Cf. Richard Gale, *The Language of Time*; s. also "Tensed statements", *Philosophical Quarterly*, 12 (1962), pp.53-9.
296. Cf. H.N. Castaneda, "Omniscience and indexical reference", *Journal of Philosophy*, 64 (1967), pp.203-10.
297. Cf. D.C. Williams, "The myth of passage", *Journal of Philosophy*, 48 (1951), pp.457-72.
298. Cf. D.H. Melor, *Real Time*, Cambridge, 1981.
299. David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, London, 1980, pp.210-12.
300. A major difference on the question of time was that whereas Epicurus postulated time-atoms, the Stoics held time to be continuous and infinitely divisible; the convergence on ascribing to time a lower reality is due to different reasons as Epicurus regarded time as a mere attribute of an attribute, a mere appearance, a symptom accompanying things in motion; the Stoic views on the question have already been discussed both in the Introduction and in this paragraph.
301. Such was the view of Diodorus Cronus as presented by Sextus Empiricus; s. *Adversus Mathematicos* 10.85-90; 143; 347-9; also *Phyrronia* 2.245; 3.71. On Diodorus Cronus, including biographical information, a work by David Sedley particularly useful: "Diodorus Cronus and Hellenistic Philosophy", *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, n.s. 23 (1977), pp.74-120.
302. The history of this notion is expounded by R. Sorabji in *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, chs. 5 and 25. However it is still a moot question whether these "leaps" should be regarded as something different from "time-atoms"; on this there is current discussion among scholars stemming from different interpretations of ancient texts, especially those of the Sceptic Sextus Empiricus and the Neoplatonists Simplicius and Damascius -the head of the Neoplatonic school at Athens at the time of its closure by Justinian, in A.D.529.
303. This is a distinction proposed by Iamblichus, who died around A.D. 325; Cf. *Iamblichi Chalcidensis in Platonis Dialogos Commentariorum Fragmenta*, Leiden, 1973; Frs 61-8. His views are also reported by Simplicius as presented in S.Sambursky and S. Pines, *The Concept of Time in Late Neoplatonism*, pp.94-99. According to this testimony, Iamblichus distinguished a generative (γενεσιουργός) time and a generated (γενητός) and flowing (πέων) one. The former is regarded as existing before all temporal things whereas it is only to the latter which is divisible into past, present and future. In short, Iamblichus makes the distinction between a higher *now* and a lower *now*.

304. The term "background" pertains to the reader, of course, and not to Origen; for many of the views referred here are posterior to Origen. What we meant to show, nevertheless, is that the questions about time on which Origen did provide answers have been highly controversial since antiquity until our day.

305. A modern work providing an account of Aristotle's commitment to tensed discourse is Jaakko Hintikka's *Time and Necessity*, Oxford, 1973; chs. 4 and 5.

306. Cf. Storrs McCall, "Temporal flux", *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 3 (1966), pp.193-224.

307. Cf. W.V.O. Quine, *Word and Object*, Cambridge Mass., 1960.

308. Cf. Nelson Goodman, *The Structure of Appearance*, Cambridge Mass., 1951.

309. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

310. *deOr*, XXVII, 15.

311. *ibid*.

312. *ibid*.

313. *homJer*, 16, 6.

314. *homJer*, 16, 5.

315. Cf. *commJohn*, 1, VI; *frJohn*, X; *homJer*, 1, 8.

316. *Princ*, III.4.1.

317. *Princ*, III.5.3. We recall that this paragraph for most of its part (and definitely its beginning) should be regarded as having suffered interpolations by Rufinus. However, there is no reason to dispute the scriptural passage on which the notion of prolongation of time is grounded. Generally, the scriptural authority as found in *Princ*, is also found in writings in Greek. What constitutes the interpolation of Rufinus here is idea that the narration in Genesis does not refer to the very beginning of the actual creation (later we adduce evidence for the opposite); but the the notion of prolongation of time is Origen's. At any rate, the notion of prolongation of time is clearly considered and enunciated in *deOr*. (s. *supra*).

318. *Ecc1*.1,9,10.

319. *Princ*, III.5.3.

320. *Princ*, II.1.3.; s. also, *Princ*, II.3.1; III.5.3; *deOr*, XXVII, 15.

321. *Princ*, II.5.3.

322. *Wisdom*, 13,9.

323. *Eph*.2,7.

324. *Princ*, II.3.5.

325. *commMatt*, 14, 5; our italics.

326. *commJohn*, 19, XIV.

327. *ibid*.

328. *Princ*, II.3.6.

329. *Princ*, IV.4.1.

330. Here, especially in the expression "we think", we again find Origen's notion of relativity in the perception of time from various ranks of life; it should again be stressed that this relativity refers to the perception of time and this is why Origen uses the expression "we think" referring to the apprehension of the duration of the ages.

331. Acts, 3,21.

332. *Princ*, II.3.5.

333. SVF, I, 32, 19.

334. *FP*, p.83, n.1.

335. *Cels*, IV, 62.

336. *Cels*, V, 20.

337. The instances in this argument are commonplace: cf. *Cels*, V, 20; Tatian, 3; Eusebius, "Theophan." II, 21; Nemesius, "de Nat. Hom." 38; Augustine, *de Civ. Dei*, XII, 13; Origen gives the argument with Biblical instances in *Princ*, II, 3, 4. Cited in H. Chadwick's *Contra Celsum*, p. 237, n. 5.

338. The Stoic gods are not exempt from the process of ἐκνύπρωσις and διακόσμησις.

339. *Cels*, IV, 67-68.

340. Some later Stoics rejected this doctrine, notably Panaetius (Diog. Laert. VII, 142; Cicero, *de Nat. Deor.* II, 46; Diels, *Dox. Gr.* 469) and Boethus (Philo, *de Aetern. Mundi* 78ff). Clement suggests the correspondence with the Christian idea of resurrection (*Strom.* V, 9, 4). Cited by H. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p. 279, n. 6.

341. *Cels*, V, 20. Regarding the scriptural passages where the term αἰών is used in the plural, H. Sasse points out that they constitute an "obvious suggestion that the αἰών is not unique, but there is a series of αἰώνες in which all things flow in eternal recurrence." [H. Sasse, "Αἰών", p. 204]. He affirms, however, that "The biblical view of the uniqueness of the course of the world, which is also a view of Persian religion, stands in antithesis to the pantheistic and astrological doctrine of recurrence with its confusion of God and the world, of eternity and time." [*op. cit.*, p. 205]. Origen does reject the doctrine of recurrence, too. What Sasse does not explain is why the notion of many "aeons" necessarily entails "eternal recurrence" [*ibid.*]; he just postulates this view without providing any reasoning for that. Our discussion in this work will show that this assumption of Sasse is wrong, namely a time which is understood as comprising many consecutive aeons does not necessarily entail any doctrine of eternal recurrence.

342. *FP*, p. 83, n. 1.

343. *Princ*, II.3.4.

344. *Cels*, V, 21.

345. *Cels*, V, 21.

346. *ibid.*

347. Cf. Plato *Timaeus*, 39D.

348. *Cels*, V, 21.

349. *ibid*.

350. H. Sasse, "Αὐν", *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testamen*, vol.1, p.205.

351. Eph.5,16.

352. Gen.47,16.

353. Ps.89,10.

354. *frMatt*, 134.

355. *ibid*.

356. *commMatt*, 17, 23.

357. *selJob*, 35.

358. Ps. 35,10.

359. *enarrJob*, 35.

360. *commMatt*, 17, 28.

361. *selPs*, 58. This is one of the more expressive statements for the need of a prolonged time. As we point out in chapter 3, §4, if, hypothetically, free moral action was the proper one, by everyone and at every moment, then there would be no need for a time consisted of many aeons.

362. *selEz*, 5.

363. *Cels*, IV, 12.

364. *Cels*, IV, 13.

365. *ibid*.

366. We translate the term παντός not as "universe", as H. Chadwick does, but as "everything that exists", in order to maintain Origen's conception of the world; anyway this term is used by Origen here because it was Celsus who used it in his allegations.

367. *Cels*, IV, 21.

368. Wis. 10,3; 10,4; 10,7.

369. Ps.77,47.

370. *commJohn*, 20, IV.

371. *Cels*, IV, 20.

372. H. Chadwick here translates the term κόσμος as "universe"; we think, however, that the term "world", in the sense already discussed, is more appropriate here; for Origen does not refer to the visible firmament, but to the moral action of rational creatures of all the ranks of life.

373. *Cels*, IV, 64.

374. *Cels*, IV, 65.

375. s. also *Cels*, III,42.

376. *Cels*, IV, 66.

377. *Cels*, IV, 12.

378. Cf. *Timaeus* 22D; Cf. *Cels*, I,19; IV,11.

379. *Cels*, IV, 20.

380. *Theaetetus*, 176A; Cf. *Cels*, VIII,55.

381. *Timaeus*, 22D.

382. *Cels*, IV, 62.

383. I Cor.3,12.

384. Mal.3,2. 385. Ez.22,18.
386. *Cels*, V, 15. 387. *Cels*, IV, 11.
388. *Cels*, IV, 11. 389. *Cels*, IV, 21.
390. *Cels*, IV, 12. ppp
391. *Meditations*, II.12; IV.63; VI.15; VII.19; IX.28; IX.32; XI.2; XII.32; Cf. J. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, p.284.
392. *Meditations*, IX.28. Cf. J.Rist, *op. cit.*, p.284.
393. Cf. J.Rist, *ibid.*
394. Cf. A.H. Armstrong- R.A. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, London, 1960; p.121ff.
395. *Princ*, II.3.4. 396. *deOr*, XXVII, 15.
397. *Cels*, IV, 67. 398. *Cels*, IV, III.
399. *commJohn*, 10, XLII. 400. *Cels*, IV, 12.
401. s. ch.5; It is not incidental that we use the term *final* end.
402. *Med* II.14; The same argument is found in earlier writers, namely Lucretius and Cicero. Cf. Lucretius, *de Rerum Natura*, bk 3, II. 1087-94; Cicero, *Tusc* 1.39.94; cited by R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.180 and n.14.
403. Seneca. *Ep. Mor.* 32; 93,7; 101,8-9. cited *loc. cit.*
404. Plotinus, too, argues for recurrence by another argument: He maintains that there is only a finite number of seminal reasons (λόγοι); so, when there as many creatures as the number of seminal reasons, a new period and a new cosmos will have to start, containing the same creatures. Cf. *Enneads* IV.7.1 (23-5); IV.7.3 (14-9).
405. Aristotle, too, did not accept the idea of a prolonged time. As regards this, he argued against Plato was that the Idea of Good would not be more good through being everlasting, in the same sense that a white thing will not be whiter for lasting longer. (*Ethica Nicomachea*, 1.6,1096b3-5; *Ethica Eudemia*, 1.8, 1218a10-15).
406. Epicurus, too, held that life can be perfect in a lifetime, even if it is short (*Principal Sayings* 19 and 20; *Letter to Menoeceus* 126 (=Diog. Laert. 10.126 and 145)).
407. *Cels*, IV, 57.
408. H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, p. 231, n.2.

409. *op. cit.*, p.231, n.2.

410. *Cels*, VI, 59.

411. *ibid.*

412. *Cels*, IV, 21. That the term "whole" means the entirety of the world is discussed in chapter 5; s. also *Cels*, V, 43 and 44.

413. *Cels*, IV, 64.

414. Cf. SVF, II, 337, 33.

415. *Cels*, IV, 60.

416. *Cels*, IV, 60.

417. Ps. 101, 28.

418. Mal. 3, 6.

419. *Cels*, IV, 14.

420. Cf. SVF, II, 308, 2934; II, 311, 23-32.

421. We translate ουσία as "essence", namely with its exact correspondent in English. The rendering of ουσία (essence) by the term "being" by H. Chadwick, as mistaken, not only on grounds of philology, but mainly on the grounds of the actual content attributed to the term; for, as we have discussed in chapter 1, soul alone is in no way regarded as a "being" itself.

422. Here, again, we translate ουσία as "essence", not as it is in the Chadwick's translation, namely as "being".

423. We translate υπόστασις as "hypostasis" since this Greek word has been employed in English, too; the rendering of the term as "being" as mistaken; Origen here uses the term ψυχή for human beings and the term υπόστασις in order to speak of the incorporeal element of the beings of higher ranks of life; for it is Origen's view that the term ψυχή applies only to the human beings (see *Cels*, VI, 71; VII, 38; *commJohn*, 1, XXV); therefore, the term υπόστασις cannot be translated as "being" for exactly the same reason that ψυχή cannot be translated as "being" either.

424. *Cels*, VI, 71. s. also *Cels*, VI, 58.

425. *Cels*, V, 15.

426. *Cels*, IV, 9. In this passage we do not follow H. Chadwick's translation; further we translate the term περί πάντων word by word, namely "of everyone" or "about everyone"; H. Chadwick translates it as "of all men", quite mistakenly, we think, as nowhere Origen speaks of "men" at all. It is a fundamental view of Origen's that "judgement" applies to the entirety of the world and not only to the human rank of life; this is why he speaks of "everyone" (περί πάντων) and not just of human beings.

At this point we take the opportunity to point out two major mistakes which

fundamentally determine H. Chadwick's translation of *Cels*.

First, he renders crucial points of the text in a manner suggesting that Origen held a notion of a pre-existing beginningless world of incorporeal personal spirits.

Secondly, he ignores the fact that in Origen's theology the *divine-creatural*, dialectical relation is portrayed in terms of *God-rational creatures* and not in terms of *God-human beings* only.

Both these points in Chadwick's translation are rendered against the very literal meaning of the original Greek text. In this work we make a number of remarks, which are mainly related to these two points. It is due to the highly crucial implications of these aspects of Origen's thought that we have reached the view that a new and correct English translation of this work of Origen's maturity is urgently needed. (Cf. ch.3, n.44.).

427. *commMatt*, 10, 2.

428. *Cels*, IV, 31.

429. *seIPs*, 1.

430. *Princ*, III.5.4.

431. *Princ*, III.1.10; Cf. *Princ*, III.1.10: οὕτω τοίνυν καί τὰ γινόμενα υπό τοῦ θεοῦ τεράστια οἰονεῖ υετός ἐστιν αἱ δέ προαιρέσεις αἱ διάφοροι οἰονεῖ ἡ γεχωρημένη γῆ ἐστι καί ἡ ημελημένη, μιά τῇ φύσει ὡς γῆ υπάρχουσα...

432. Rom.9,20.

433. Gal.16,15. This does not suggest any notion of reincarnation. s. ch. 3, §1.

434. II Tim.,2,21. *Princ*, III.3.23; s. also *commMatt*, 10,11.

435. *seIPs*, 135.

436. s. also *Cels*, IV, 65.

437. *commJohn*, 20, XXIII.

438. *commJohn*, 20, XXIV.

439. *ibid*.

440. *Princ*, III.1.12.

441. *commJohn*, 20, XIII.

442. *commJohn*, 20, XV; s. also *commEph*, p. 404 and p. 407.

443. *Cels*, III, 41.

444. A dictionary definition; cf. *Doxographi Graeci*, 307a.2.

445. *Cels*, VI, 77.

446. *Cels*, IV, 57.

447. *Princ*, II.1.4.

448. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

449. *seIPs*, 1.

450. *ibid*.

451. *Cels*, VI, 57.

452. Cf. I Cor. 15, 40-44. *Cels*, IV, 57.

453. *commMatt*, 13, 28; *expProv*, 28.

454. *commMatt*, 17, 30.
455. *ibid*.
456. *ibid*.
457. *frJohn*, CXXXIX.
458. *commJohn*, 1, XXVI.
459. *commMatt*, 15, 27.
460. *commMatt*, 10, 13.
461. *commMatt*, 17, 16.
462. *commMatt*, 12, 30.
463. *commJohn*, 20, V.
464. *Princ*, III.1.23.
465. *Princ*, II.9.8.
466. Using the language of Ps.45,3.
467. *selPs*, 45.
468. *selPs*, 138.
469. Quoting I Cor. 15, 35-38; s. *Cels*, V,18.
470. I Cor. 15,38.
471. *Cels*, V, 19.
472. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.
473. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.188; his italics. This miscomprehension is not surprising as the author, like the majority of scholars, draws his assertions about Origen's thought from the *Princ*.
474. This mistake is too often found in H. Chadwick's translation of *Cels*, as we have commented at some points in this work.
475. An expample of that is the R. Norris' *God and World in Early Christian Theology*, (New York, 1965), where the author's assertions are based on the assumption that Origen's world-picture is but that of Plotinus' and he tries to render his views in Plotinian terms. We discuss some assertions of this author at other points in this work.
476. *selPs*, 1.
477. *homJer*, 3, 3.
478. *ibid*.
479. *homJer*, 7, 1.
480. *ibid*.
481. *homJer*, 7, 2.
482. *ibid*.
483. Heb.8,5.
484. *homJer*, 7, 1.
485. Matt.12,32: Mark 3,29: Cf. Luke 12,10.
486. Using the language of Eph.2,7; s. also *commJohn*, 2, XI; 19, XIV.
487. *homJer*, 12, 10.
488. Matt.12,32. *commMatt*, 15, 31.
489. Cf. Marguerite Harl, *Origène et la fonction revelatrice du Verbe Incarné*, Paris, 1958; pp.70-1.



490. *commMatt*, 14, 12.
491. Cf. *selJos*, (M.12.B20).
492. *deOr*, XXVII, 14.
493. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX.
494. s. also *Princ*, III.1.14.
495. *Cels*, IV, 69.
496. P. Plass, *op. cit.*, p.14.
497. J. Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, tr. J.A. Baker, London, 1973; p.496.
498. *deOr*, XXVII, 16.
499. On this point of *deOr* we discuss in chapter 3, §2.
500. Cf. *frMatt*, 396; *frMatt*, 400; *commMatt*, 15, 31; 15, 34; *homJer*, 12, 10. In the last passage it is explicitly stated not only that "day" signifies the "present aeon" but also that the end of the day will be "darkness and night" because at the end of this "day" there will be "consummation" and "punishment". Also *selPs*, 40; *selPs*, 41.
501. *deOr*, XXVII, 13.
502. Cf. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*. The author suggests that it was only with Eudemos that the idea that *time* will be the same was put forward. (p.184).
503. Cf. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.184ff.
504. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 22C ff, 23A ff.
505. Cf. Plato, *State*, 499C.
506. Aristotle, *Physics*, 223B.28-29; Cf. also 223B.24-25; 223B.31-33.
507. O. Cullman has based his assertions about Greek view of time on that point of Aristotle and refers to a number of scholars who treated the passage in the same way; Cf. *Christ and Time*, (Greek tr. by P. Coumantos, Athens, 1980); p.240, n.3. Similarly, Cf. C.Puech, "Gnosis and Time", in *Man and Time*, Princeton, 1973; p.42 and n.6.
- What Aristotle suggests is that time is not rectilinear but *curved*. Although not referring to Aristotle's view, quite rightly T. Boman has criticized Cullman for asserting that time is "rectilinear" whereas astronomical time is always cyclic; Cf. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, tr. by J. Moreau, London, 1960; p.162.
508. In fact the only reason is the insistence of certain theologians who find it convenient to articulate a simplistic and misleading global description of time as a "Greek" one, in order to make the point of a Hebraic and Christian "rectilinear"

time. But they should be convinced that to make assertions first about *time in itself* and second about the conception of time in Greek thought needs more toil and painstaking work.

509. O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, p.62 and 76; He draws the notion from the scriptural expression "before the aeons" (πρό τῶν αἰώνων) (1 Cor.2,7). He postulates that this expression does not prove that what is "before time" is timeless. Yet he does not himself prove this allegation.

510. *ibid.*

511. *op. cit.*, p.76.

512. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.63.

513. *op. cit.*, p.73.

514. *op. cit.*, p.73.

515. *op. cit.*, p.73.

516. Let us, for a moment, neglect the fact that "history" is a category pertaining to human rank of life, whereas Origen's conception of the movement of the world is something much broader than just the human history

517. H. Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (Paris, 1889), translated into English as *Time and Free Will*, London, 1910; pp.90-1, 98-110.

518. Origen does deal with the question of the relation of time and motion; s. §3 in this chapter. We have already seen that he does not identify *time* with *motion*. What he does not need to do, however, is to consider whether time is originated in motion, or vice versa. He just affirms that they co-exist. His view on the question can be regarded as complete, because the definition of time as *extension* and *dimension* constitutes an objectivistic view of time non-dependent upon the category of motion. Here is what constitutes a step beyond the accounts of Greek philosophy: Platonists, Aristotelians, Stoics, Epicureans and Neoplatonists had to give an account of the relation of time proper to motion. For in all of them (despite their different conceptions of time) *motion* appears as an intrinsic notion of their definition of time. By contrast, motion is not a notion inherent in Origen's conception of time because he defined it in a more objective way, namely by introducing the term *συμπαραεκτεινόμενον* which exerted so decisive an influence upon his successors.

519. Cf., for example, S. Shoemaker, "Time without change", *Journal of Philosophy*, 66 (1969), pp.363-81.

520. The title of that chapter is "Free Will".

521. J. Oulton-H. Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, London, 1956; we discuss this point in Appendix B.

522. *Princ*, III.1.4; *deOr*, VI, 1.

523. *deOr*, VI, 1. *Princ*, III.1.2.

524. *Princ*, III.1.2; *deOr*, VI, 1.

525. The translation of τὰ φορητὰ τῶν νεφυτευμένων as "the produce of what has been planted" is not correct; for the meaning of the expression is "what is portable among plants"; besides Origen here refers to motion of "living creatures" and the "produce of what has been planted is not such an one.

526. *Princ*, III.1.2; *deOr*, V, 5; also, *deOr*, VI, 1.

527. *Princ*, III.1.2.

528. *deOr*, VI, 1.

529. *deOr*, VI, 1.; *Princ*, III.1.2.

530. *Princ*, III.1.2.

531. *Princ*, III.1.2.

532. Cf. L. and S., p.498. *Princ*, III.1.2; *deOr*, VI, 1.

533. *Princ*, III.1.2.

534. *deOr*, VI, 1.

535. *Princ*, III.1.2; *deOr*, VI, 1.

536. *Princ*, III.1.2.

537. *Princ*, III.1.3.

538. *deOr*, VI, 1.

539. *Princ*, III.1.3.

540. *Princ*, III.1.3; III.1.5.

541. *Princ*, III.1.5.

542. *selPs*, 71.

543. *Enneads*, III.7.8.

544. *Princ*, I.7.3.

545. *Princ*, II.8.2.

546. *Princ*, II.11.1.

547. *Princ*, III.3.5.

548. *commJohn*, 20, XIII.

549. Stobaeus, *Eclogue*, II,96,18 W; SVF, III,136,18ff.

550. Cels, VI, 73.

551. *selPs*, 117.

552. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.

553. Cf. SVF, I,47,24; III,17,20; III,17,21; III,28,6; Diog. 218,16; Apollod. 261,8.

554. *homJer*, 5, 10; ταῦτα δέ ἐστίν κατηγορία τοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πολλοῦ αμαρτάνειν. "ἀπὸ νεότητος" φησὶν "ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης, καὶ οὐχ υπηκούσαμεν τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν" ἡμάρτομεν, καὶ οὐχ υπηκούσαμεν ἕως τοῦ παρόντος. εἶτα ἐπιστρέψαντες καὶ ἀρχὴν ἔχοντες ἐπιστροφῆς λέγουσιν τὸ 'ἡμάρτομεν καὶ οὐχ υπηκούσαμεν'. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἅμα τῷ θέλῃν υπακούσαι ἤδη εὐθέως υπακούομεν' καὶ γὰρ ἐτι χρόνου δεῖ, ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν τραυμάτων πρὸς τὴν ἰάσιν, οὕτως καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς, πρὸς τὸ τελείως καὶ καθαρῶς ἐπιστρέψαι πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

555. *seIEx* (M.12.261ff).

556. *adnotEx*; Εν όθαις τεσσαράκοντα ημέραις δούναι τόν νόμον κατείχε τόν Μωϋσήν ό πάνσοφος θεός, καίτοι δυνατώσ έχων έν τρισίν ημέραις δούναι τόν Νόμον. 'Αλλά' ίνα τό κεκρυμμένον τής ασεβείας έν τώ βάθει τής καρδιάς τών Ιουδαίων ό χρόνος τής απουσίας Μωϋσέως ελέγχξη. (M.17.16ff).

557. *commMatt*, 15, 26.

558. *ibid*.

559. *commMatt*, 15, 34. Origen refers to the parable in Matt.,20,1-16.

560. *enarrJob*, 2; Όρα τόν κακούργον. Ότε πολύς διήλθε χρόνος, τότε επιτίθεται' τότε γάρ μάλιστα τής δυνάμεως εξασθενεί. Διηλά τά τής ασθενείας ήν, τώ τε τόν φέροντα ασθενέστερον γενέσθαι τώ μήκει τού χρόνου καί τώ τήν ελπίδα απογνωσθήναι μάλλον.

561. *enarrJob*, 2; Ούκ επέκαμψεν αυτόν χρημάτων απώλεια, ουδέ παίδων θάνατος άωρος, ουδέ βάσανος σώματος απαραμύθητος, ουδέ μήκος χρόνου τσοούτον.

562. SVF, I,26,11-12.

563. Cf. SVF, I,26,11-12.

564. *enarrJob*, 2.

565. Susanna V.42.

566. Princ, III.1.17.

567. *ibid*

568. *frMatt*, 383.

569. *commMatt*, 14, 5.

570. Cf. SVF, I,26,11-12.

571. *commMatt*, 15, 18.

572. SVF, I,26,13-14.

573. *frMatt*, 487.

574. *frJohn*, I; *frJohn*, CX.

575. *Cels*, VII, 50; *seIPs*, 143; *commJohn*, 1, XVII; etc.

576. *commJohn*, 1, XXV; Άέχω δέ τών λογικών ψυχών τών έν τώ αισθητικώ κόσμω καί εί τι παρά ταύτα συμπληροί τόν κόσμον.

577. *Cels*, IV, 99.

578. *commEph*, p.242.

579. Princ, II.9.8. The translation of the text is from *FP*.

580. Princ, III.2.3.

581. Princ, III.2.5.

582. Princ, I.8.1. Cf. Princ, III.1.10.

583. *homLuc*, 17.

584. *commGen*, 3.

585. *ibid*. s. also Princ, III.1.23.

586. *seIEz*, 2.

587. This is a Stoic argument, severely criticized by Alexander of Aphrodisias, *de*

*Fato*, 10. Cf. SVF, II, 279, 13ff.

588. *Cels*, II, 20.

589. *commGen*, 3.

590. *ibid*.

591. The term *γινόμενα*, used by Origen, is of Stoic origin and was used exactly to express the notion of "occurrences" in the world; Cf. SVF, I, 26, 11-15.

592. *frLuc*, 57 -commenting on Luke, 12, 6; *frMatt*, 212 -commenting on Matt. 10, 29.

593. *commGen*, 3. However this passage should be treated with some caution. The notion of causality is treated in a rather awkward manner and one would draw the misleading conclusion that here Origen suggests that human action is but a chain of causative acts -which is a simplistic and tricky notion. As a matter of fact this text is an extract of the *Philocalia* (s. Bibliography) and not a work of Origen himself. What the reader should keep from this passage of this the notion of creaturely freedom and that of natural causality which are discussed at this point.

594. *Princ*, III.1.3.

595. *Princ*, III.1.5.

596. *commGen*, 3. It has been asserted that the singular and contingent does not interest the Greek philosopher (Cf. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", p.43). We shall not discuss this view in itself, as it is beyond our scope. We only note that the "singular and contingent" *does* interest Origen. In fact this is one of the main preoccupations of his thought. This is why a rational creature is defined by its personal relation to God; and this is why God is stated as omniscient of any contingent act of any single rational creature.

597. *commGen*, 3; s. also, *deOr*, VI, 4.

598. The term "during" is here being used loosely, since "judgement" is regarded as having no duration at all.

599. *Cels*, IV, 64.

600. *frMatt*, 485; 486; 487.

601. *Princ*, III.1.19.

602. *Cels*, IV, 69; also *Cels*, V, 15.

603. *Princ*, I.8.1. Cf. *Princ*, III.1.10.

604. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.

605. Since our discussion here is about action of rational creatures, we need not to refer to the case (discussed by Aristotle) of cause and effect being *simultaneous*, as it happens in the case of an eclipse.

606. Jerem.1.5,6.

607. Acts, 16, 16.

608. This is one more interpolation of Rufinus which undoubtedly must have

played its part in the distortion of Origen's thought; it is also one more proof that Rufinus lacked the understanding of many crucial facets of Origen's thought. For as we prove in ch.3,§1 Origen firmly held that a soul is never found without a body. This notion is in accordance with Origen's perception of a rational being as an inseparable entity, despite the conceptual distinction between incorporeal and corporeal element. At his point almost all the scholars have miscomprehended Origen's thought. H. Crouzel only recently revised his older view of "soul without a body" and concedes the authentic view of Origen -yet not to a satisfactory extent, as we argue in chapter 3, §1.

609. *Princ.*, III.3.5.                      610. *Princ.*, II.9.7.      611. *Princ.*, III.1.22.

612. *Princ.*, II.9.7.                      613. *Princ.*, II.9.7.      614. *Princ.*, II.9.8.

615. *Princ.*, II.9.4.

616. The notion of *kairos*, as well as the actual meaning and content of notions such as *prophecy*, *promise*, *hope*, *expectation*, *fulfilment*, *realization*, are discussed in chapter 3.

617. *homLuc*, 11.                      618. Mat.26,22; Marc.14,19.

619. *commJohn*, 32, XIX.                      620. *frMatt*, 141.

621. *commMatt*, 10, 11.                      622. *Cels*, IV, 32.

623. *commJohn*, 1, XIX; *commJohn*, 1, XVI.

624. J. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, p.286.

625. J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p.288.

626. J. Rist, *op. cit.*, p.287.

627. What the actual content of this *hope* is will be discussed later, as we have already noted. We here point out that Origen quite often uses the term "hope" itself in order to portray not only the final aim, but also the direction of action in time; s. *Cels*, IV, 38; V, 10; VIII, 50; 16,167

628. *deOr*, VI, 4.

629. Cf. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, p.94.

630. *op. cit.*, p.95; Cf. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", pp.39-46.

631. our italics; *op. cit.*, p.170; Cf. also pp.171, 184ff.

632. B. van Gronigen, *In the Grip of the Past: An Essay on an Aspect of Greek Thought*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1953; pp.2-12; s. also pp. 94-5, 107-8, 115-9.

633. *op. cit.*, pp.28-9

634. *commJohn*, 20, XIII.

635. *seIPs*, 5.

636. H. Chadwick, "The evidences of Christianity in the Apologetic of Origen", *Studia Patristica*, II, TU 64, 1957, p.336.

637. T. Boman, *op. cit.*, p.170.

638. *deOr*, V, 2.

639. Susanna, 42.

640. Matt., 6, 8.

641. Ps. 57, 4.

642. Gal. 1, 15.

643. Rom., 9, 11-12.

644. *deOr*, V, 6.

645. Rom. 1, 20.

646. Matt. 25, 34; Luke 11, 50; Heb. 4, 3; 9, 26; Rev. 13, 8; 17, 8.

647. *deOr*, VII.

648. *deOr*, VI, 4.

649. Eph. 3, 20.

650. *deOr*, VI, 4.

651. Origen adopts the same method in *deOr*, XIV, 1; XV, 4; XXIX, 14.

652. *deOr*, VI, 4.

653. *deOr*, V, 5.

654. *ibid.*

655. *deOr*, VI, 4.

656. *ibid.*

657. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, pp. 247ff; 257ff.

658. *deOr*, VIII, 2.

659. *deOr*, VI, 4.

660. *frJohn*, I; *frJohn*, CX.

661. *deOr*, VI, 4.

662. I Kings 8, 30.

663. *deOr*, X, 1.

664. *deOr*, VI, 3.

665. *deOr*, VI, 5.

666. *seIEx* (M. 12.281ff).

667. *frMatt*, 21.

668. *deOr*, XXIV, 2.

669. *Princ*, III.1.14.

670. *Cels*, IV, 82.

671. Jer. 18: 8, 10. *homJer*, 18, 5.

672. *homJer*, 18, 6.

673. *homJer*, 18, 6.

674. *homJer*, 18, 3.

675. *homJer*, 18, 6.

676. The arguments in the ensuing discussion are from *frReg*, IV, V.

677. *deOr*, VI, 5.

678. *Cels*, III, 38; s. also *Cels*, IV, 69; VI, 79.

679. Cf. *Cels*, II, 20.

680. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.240-1.

681. *expProv*, 18.

682. R. Sorabji makes the same erroneous allegations about Origen's views at another point, too; Cf. *op. cit.*, p.257

683. *op. cit.*, p.260.

684. P. Plass, *op. cit.*, p.16-7.

685. *frMatt*, 211; *commMatt*.10,29-31]

686. *Cels*, VI, 71.

687. *Princ.*, II.9.8.

688. *Cels*, IV, 99.

689. *frMatt*, 212.

690. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.251.

691. Cf. *frMatt*, 212.

692. H. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.48.

693. H. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.49ff.

694. *expProv*, 18; s. also *expProv*, 28; *Princ*, III.1.13. To elaborate further on this question would require a detailed discussion of Origen's conception of *νόμοι* which beyond the scope of this work.

695. Cited in E. Jay, *Origen's Treatise on Prayer*, London 1954, p.101.

696. P. Plass, *op. cit.*, p.16-7.

697. We discuss this conception of Origen's in chapter 3,82.

698. A.H. Armstrong- R.A. Markus, *op. cit.*, p.132.

699. Cf. Nelson Pike, "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action", *Philosophical Review*, 74 (1965), pp.27-46; also, by the same author, *God and Timelessness*, London, 1970, esp. pp.104-7.

700. Cf. J.R. Lucas, *The Freedom of the Will*, London, 1973; ch.14.

701. Cf. Gary Iseminger, "Foreknowledge and Necessity: *Summa Theologiae* Ia, 14, 13,2", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 1 (eds. P.A. French, T.E. Uehling jr., H.K.Wettstein), Morris Minesota, 1976; pp.5-25.

702. Cf. Richard Sorabji, *Necessity, Cause and Blame*, London, 1980; pp.112-3.

703. Cf. J. van Gerven "Liberté humaine at prescience divine d' après S. Augustine", *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, 55 (1957), pp.317-30.

704. Cf. Robert Sharples, "Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De Fato*: some parallels", *Classical Quarterly*, 28 (1978), pp.243-66.

705. For example, a question which has been posed is this: If God's knowledge is



either timeless or changeless, can he know truths which depend on the flow of time?

Cf. Nelson Pike, *God and Timelessness*, London, 1970, ch.5;

Arthur Prior, "The formalities of omniscience", *Philosophy*, 1962, reprinted in ch.3 of his *Papers on Time and Tense*, Oxford, 1968;

Normann Kretzmann "Omniscience and immutability", *Journal of Philosophy*, 63 (1966), pp.109-21;

H.N. Castaneda "Omniscience and indexical reference", *Journal of Philosophy*, 64 (1967), pp.203-10; Nicholas Wolterstorff, "God everlasting", in Orlebeke and Smedes (eds), *God and the Good*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975;

E. Stump and N. Kretzmann "Eternity", *Journal of Philosophy*, 78 (1981), pp.429-58; etc.

On the question whether *power* can be changeless or timeless. Cf. A.J.P. Kenny, *The God of the Philosophers*, Oxford, 1979, , ch.8; Peter Geach, *Truth, Love and Immortality*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1979, p.102; E. Bevan, *Symbolism and Belief*, London, 1938, p.98. However the discussion of such questions in themselves is out of our scope.

**706.** Cf. M. Capec (ed.), *The Concepts of Space and Time*, Dordrecht, 1976, p.xxxv and lvi, n.4.

**707.** Fragment 19, Koetschau, from Justinian, *IibOr* (Mansi IX.529), incorporated in *Princ*, II.3.3.

**708.** Jerome, *epAv*; cited in *FP*, p.86, n.6.

**709.** Fragment 40, Koetschau, from Justinian, *IibOr* (Mansi, IX. 532) incorporated by Koetschau in *Princ*, IV.4.8.

**710.** From Justinian, *IibOr* (Mansi, IX.512E); incorporated by Koetschau in *Princ*, II.8.3.

**711.** *FP*, p.125, n.7.

**712.** Cf. *supra*, Fragment 40, Koetschau, from Justinian, *IibOr* (Mansi, IX. 532).

**713.** *commMatt*, 15, 27.

**714.** *commGen*, 3; *deOr*, VI, 5.

**715.** *ibid*; s. also chapter 5.

**716.** At any rate, the conjecture of J. Cheek that Origen "did not conceive time as a problem which had to be solved abstractly" is wrong [s. J. Cheek, *Eschatology and Redemption in the Theology of Origen*, Drew University, 1962, p.275]. The case is not that Origen "did not conceive" but that he *did not want* to expound an *ad hoc* theory of time, because he regarded this problem as fundamentally a "natural" one.

But he *did form* a conception of time of his own and for his own theological purposes. This conception is decisively present throughout his entire work. As we shall argue in the ensuing chapters, actually Origen's conception of time is far more advanced than any articulation of "Christian view of time" made by contemporary theologians. For he had a very good command of *the problematique of time in itself*—the lack of which is too apparent in modern scholars such as O. Cullmann and H. Puech. On this question see chapter 5.

717. SVF, I, 26,11-15.

718. *commGen*, 3.

### Notes to Chapter 3

1. *Cels*, VI, 71; VII, 38; *commJohn*, 1, XXV.

2. *frJohn*, XLV.

3. Cf. Heb. 5,11.

4. *commJohn*, 6, XIV.

5. *commMatt*, 13, 1.

6. *commMatt*, 10, 20.

7. *commJohn*, 6, XI. How much Origen's thought has suffered from distortions, misunderstandings and superficiality is a question on which we comment in various parts of this treatise. But there are some works where this distortion reaches its zenith. Such is the work by F. Solmsen "Providence and the Souls: A Platonic Chapter in Clement of Alexandria", [*Zeitschrift für klassische Altertumswissenschaft*, Basel, 26 (1969), pp.229-51.]. He attempts to make allegations about Origen's thought out of a study of the *Princ* only. Even so, what he thinks he finds there is that "the evidence that reincarnation was an integral part" of Origen's theology "is overwhelming" [p.246]. What he regards as "overwhelming evidence" are some quotations of Justinian in the edition of P. Koetschau, grossly misconstrued by the author. The claims about Origen's thought are so garbled and superficial that this article is not worthy of being commented on at all. However, we adduce it as an example of how rudely Origen's thought has been falsified and suffered by those who did not study his work before making any claims about it.

8. *Cels*, III, 75. Plato held that human souls could become re-incarnate in animals; metempsychosis into plant, though not stated by Plato himself, was held by later Platonists such as Plotinus (cf. *Enneads*, III.4.2).

9. *Cels*, V, 49.

10. *Cels*, VIII, 30.

11. *commMatt*, 13, 1.

12. *commJohn*, 6, XII.

13. At this point Origen rejects pagan theories just by alluding to them and not naming them explicitly.

14. Matt.24,25.

15. *commMatt*, 13, 1.

16. *ibid*.

17. Luke,18,8; the same state of things is described in Matt.24,37-38.

18. *commMatt*, 13, 1. Here Origen implies his fundamental view that a rational creature can *never* live without a body. This is a point on which has totally eluded those who attribute to Origen the Platonic notion of a possibility of a creaturely life out of any body. We discuss this subject shortly below.

19. *commMatt*, 13, 1.

20. *ibid*. ἡ (ὅπερ βέλτιον) εἰς ἐστὶ τρόπος κολλήσεως τοῖς ἡμαρτηκόσιν ἐν σώματι τὸ ἔξω αὐτοῦ <καί> τῆς καταστάσεως τοῦ βίου τούτου τὸ κατ' ἀξίαν τῶν ἡμαρτημένων παθεῖν. This is exactly the affirmation by which Origen alludes to his conception of existential causality.

21. *ibid*. ἕκαστον δὲ τούτων τῷ ἐνορᾶν δυναμένῳ τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀνατρεπτικόν ἐστὶ τῆς μετενσωματώσεως.

22. *ibid* εἰ δὲ ἀναγκαίως οἱ τὴν μετενσωμάτωσιν εἰσάγοντες Ἕλληνες, ὡς ἀκόλουθα αὐτοῖς τιθέντες, οὐδὲ φθείρεσθαι βούλονται τὸν κόσμον...

23. *ibid*. εἰ δὲ μὴ φθίρεται ὁ κόσμος ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἀπείρον ἐστὶ, οὐκ ἐστὶ ὁ θεός "εἰδώς τὰ πάντα πρὸ γενέσεως αὐτῶν".

24. *ibid*. ἀπειρα γὰρ τῇ φύσει οὐχ οἷόν τε περιλαμβάνεσθαι τῇ περατοῦν πεφυκυῖα τὰ γινωσκόμενα γνῶσει. τούτῳ δὲ ἀκολουθεῖ μηδὲ προφητείας δύνασθαι γενέσθαι περὶ πάντων ὧντινωνοῦν, ἅτε ἀπείρων ὄντων τῶν πάντων.

25. *commMatt*, 13, 2.

26. *ibid*.

27. Luke,1,17.

28. *homLuc*, 4.

29. I Thess.5,23: "And the God sanctify you all and your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

30. Dan.3,86: "bless, spirits and souls of the just".

31. *commMatt*, 13, 2.

32. *commJohn*, 6, X.

33. *commJohn*, 6, XI.

34. *ibid*.

35. *ibid*.

36. I Cor.14,32.

37. IV Kings, 2,15.

38. *commMatt*, 13, 2.

39. *commJohn*, 32, XVIII.

40. *commMatt*, 13, 2.

41. *ibid*. καὶ γὰρ σαφῶς ὁ ἀπόστολος παρέστησεν ἕτερον εἶναι τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ

πνεῦμα, κἀν ἐν ἡμῖν ἢ, παρὰ τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκάστου ἀνθρώπου τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ.

42. *ibid.* δυνατόν καὶ ταῦτα νοεῖσθαι πλείονα ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ εἶναι κρείττονα πνεύματα.

43. *commMatt*, 10, 20.

44. *Cels*, IV, 17. We do not follow H. Chadwicks translation here, as there are substantial mistakes at this point. The most striking of them is that he uses the term "everlasting" for αἰώνιος although, as we shall discuss in chapter 5, there can be no notion of "everlastingness" in Origen's concept of time whatsoever. Also, if he had translated ἀθάνατον as "immortal" it would be the correct rendering of the term; yet he translates it as "immortal person", although in the original text there is no word for "person" at all; he presumably considers the incorporeal element of rational creatures as a "person" living in itself -as he does throughout the whole translation of *Cels*. Such a view though is totally mistaken, as it directly implies the existence of a "world" of "incorporeal persons" -a notion far too alien to Origen's authentic theological views, as we have seen. This is one more point vindicating our remark in chapter 2, n.426, that a correct translation of *Cels* in English is urgently needed.

45. *frRes*.

46. *ibid.*

47. *ibid.*

48. *homLuc*, 4.

49. *ibid.*

50. *commJohn*, 6, VI.

51. He extensively expounds his views on this particular subject in *commMat*: 17, 36; s. also *commJohn*, 20, XII.

52. *selPs*, 1.

53. *selPs*, 1. H. Chadwick cites this passage in his translation of *Cels* (p.420, n.7) as a testimony of Methodius from his work *de Resurrectione*, I,22,4-5. However, there is no need to appeal to Methodius' testimony on this question. For this very passage is found in Origen's commentary on the First Psalm. (s. M.12.1093). Migne also cites a passage in Latin which is almost verbatim the same to the Greek one; this is a passage from Pamphilus' *Apologia*, where he presents this affirmation as a testimony of Rufinus (sic verit Rufinus...). s. *loc. cit.*, n.65.

54. *selPs*, 1.

55. Using the language of II Cor5,1ff.

56. I Cor.15,53.

57. *Cels*, VII, 32.

58. E. de Faye, *Origène*, III, Paris 1928, pp.73-78.

59. *Princ*, I.6.4; II.2.2; IV.3.15. Also in *Homily on Exodus* VI.5; GCS, VI,197-8.

60. s. *supra*; *commMatt*, 13, 1.

61. Matt.10,28.

62. *frMatt*, 209.

63. *Cels*, V, 19.

64. H. Crouzel, "Mort et immortalité selon Origène", *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, 79 (1978), p.186.

65. If H. Crouzel had grasped this point, then he would have not made the extensive analyses on this question, on which, anyway, he does not actually provide the right answer. For he treats Origen's views as if Origen were a Platonist and Crouzel just modifies his earlier view (according to which the soul after death and before resurrection lives without a body) making the concession that Origen regards soul as being clothed with a body during that period of time. Not only the time *before* birth, not even the *two bodies* of a human being, but, above all, the fundamental and crucial role that the notion of corporeality plays in Origen's thought are not in that article. What is of supreme significance is not so much *how* a soul "lives" after death -and this expression in itself constitutes an arbitrary Platonic premise due to its articulation alone (for it is not a "soul", but a "human being", that "lives"). What is most significant is that Origen's views of corporeality actually imply his conception of a rational creature as a "whole", an inseparable entity -which is a conception far beyond any Platonic "dualistic" perception of human beings.

66. *Cels*, VII, 32.

67. *Cels*, VII, 4. According to fundamental misunderstandings of Origen's thought throughout the entire translation of *Cels*, H. Chadwick again attributes a Platonism to Origen at this point (*op. cit.*, p.397, n.2). What has eluded him though is that Origen here again emphasizes the role of the *body*. Is this a Platonic attitude? Far from that, it is again the perception of human being as an inseparable entity that undelies this affirmation of Origen. This, apart from any anticipation of the experimental findings of modern science, which will not be discussed here.

68. *Cels*, VII, 32.

69. *Cels*, 33; our italics.

70. *Cels*, V, 19.

71. *frRes*.

72. As in Luke,16,19-31.

73. *frRes*.

74. *Dial*, (BGF, p.377-8).

75. Cf. II Cor. 5,4; Plato, *Phaedrus*, 246-7; *State*, 519B.

76. Cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 81C; s. also *Cels*. II,60.

77. *Cels*, VII, 4.

78. *selPs*, 102.

79. *commJohn*, 13, XLI; s. also, *commJohn*, 13, XLV-XLVIII.
80. *expProv*, 1. 81. *commMatt*, 10, 3.
82. *expProv*, 28. 83. *commJohn*, 10, XXX.
84. *ibid*. 85. *commMatt*, 10, 13.
86. *ibid*. In view of this discussion, the analyses in *Princ* actually refer to this state of human creatures; s. *Princ*, II.11.1-6.
87. *expProv*, 24. 88. *commJohn*, 20, XIII.
89. *commMatt*, 15, 35. 90. *ibid*.
91. II Macc.15,14. *commMatt*, 15, 35.
92. II Cor.5,9. He refers to "presence" or "absence" with respect to this life.
93. *commMatt*, 15, 35. 94. I Cor.5,3-4.
95. *deOr*, XXXI, 5.
96. *frMatt*, 382. Here Origen employs the expression in I Thess.5,23.
97. *frLuc*, 34.
98. σωματικῶς καθολικῇ τις. This expression implies the fact that the incarnation of the Logos was an event of assuming corporeality in general and not just human corporeality. In the final analysis, this expression denotes the uniqueness of the incarnation and its significance for the salvation of the entire world and not human beings only. We discuss this aspect of Origen's thought later in this paragraph.
99. John,1,14. 100. John,1,9-11.
101. *homJer*, 9, 1.
102. John1,17. *commJohn*, 6, IV.
103. Ps.109,3. *commJohn*, 6, IV.
104. *commJohn*, 20, XII. The expression "there is no when" (οὐκ ἔστιν ὅτε) should not be misunderstood. It means "there was no time when" obviously pertaining to time *once it was created* onwards. Before time the Logos "was", yet not "in life" as there was no life at all. The relation of the Logos to time and "life" has been discussed in chapter 1.
105. *frJohn*, XVIII.
106. Matt.28,20. *Cels*, V, 12; s. also *Cels*, IV,5,12.
107. *Cels*, III, 14. 108. *Cels*, IV, 6.

109. *commJohn*, 19, V.

110. *frMatt*, 204; *commMatt*, 16, 22.

111. *Luke*, 1, 57.

112. *Luke*, 2, 6.

113. *homLuc*, 9.

114. *homLuc*, 15.

115. *Phil*, 2, 6.

116. *Phil*, 2, 7. *frMatt*, 3.

117. *excPs*, 50.

118. *homLuc*, 24. s. also *Cels*, IV, 9.

119. *selDeut*, (in *Deut.* 13,3). 120. *selPs*, 2.

121. *Cels*, I, 37; III, 28; III, 29; IV, 18; IV, 19.

122. *commJohn*, 10, XI. Καί ημεῖς δέ θεοῦ διδόντος γενόμενοι κατὰ τὰ τοιαύτα χωρία τῆς συναναγνώσεως ὅπου δόξαι ἄν μηδέν [άν] ηνυκέναι επιδηήσας χωρίοις τισίν, πειρασόμεθα τό μή μάταιον τῆς επιδημίας αὐτοῦ τρανώσαι.

123. *frMatt*, 54.

124. I *Tim.* 6,11. *commJohn*, 1, IX.

125. *Cels*, VI, 78.

126. *Cels*, IV, 19; *commJohn*, 10, VI.

127. *Cels*, II, 16. *Princ.* I.Pref.4; II.6.3.

128. *homJer*, 14,6.

129. *Cels*, IV, 5.

130. *commMatt*, 16, 8.

131. *Cels*, II, 9.

132. *Cels*, II, 9.

133. *commMatt*, 16, 8.

134. *commJohn*, 1, VII.

135. *John*, 1,2. *commJohn*, 1, VII.

136. *Gal*, 1,1.

137. *commJohn*, 32, XVII.

138. *John*, 12, 24. *frMatt*, 99. 139. Cf. *commGen*, 3.

140. *commJohn*, 1, VI. The term εὐαγγέλιον in Greek means "announcement of rejoicing news".

141. *commJohn*, 1, VII.

142. *Wis.* 1,2. *homLuc*, 3.

143. *Cels*, II, 64. H. Chadwick's translation of διηνεκώς as "without some periods of relief" is too far from the meaning of term.

144. *Cels*, II, 65.

145. *Cen.* 12,7; 48,3.

146. *Cels*, II, 66.

147. *Cels*, II, 67.

148. *Cels*, II,70; s. also *Cels*, VI, 77.

149. *homJer*, 9,1.                      150. *homLuc*, 15; our italics.  
 151. *Cels*, III, 38; IV, 69; *commMatt*, 17, 9; *frLuc*, 34.  
 152. *deOr*, XXVII, 15.                153. *commMatt*, 15, 31.  
 154. *Matt*.12,31.

155. *deOr*, XXVII, 15. This conception of Origen, however, in no way puts his notion of non-infinity of time in question; for it is at the same point of the same work that he implies the finite of time, as he speaks of "the paternal will concerning the order in the entirety of aeons (ἐν ἀνάσει τοῖς αἰώσι)"; it is again there that Origen reiterates the contingency concerning the dispensation in that future time; "what are the true laws to be fulfilled in" the future "no one can even imagine, save he who has contemplated the Father's will concerning his ordinances in all the ages in accordance with 'his unsearchable judgements and his unsearchable ways' (Rom.11,33)". *deOr*, XXVII, 14.

156. *selPs*, 117.                              157. *homLuc*, 24.  
 158. *selPs*, 64.                                159. *Cels*, III, 38.  
 160. *commJohn*, 1, XXXV.                161. *commJohn*, 1, IX.  
 162. *Matt*.1,1.                                163. *Gen*.5,1.  
 164. *Gen*.2,4.                                165. Cf. *John*,13,3.  
 166. *commJohn*, 32, III.                    167. *Matt*.15,24.  
 168. *Cels*, IV, 17.

169. *commJohn*, 2, VIII. It should be noted that the expressions of Origen used here to indicate the event of incarnation are characteristic of his conception of the uniqueness of this event: All the verbs referred to incarnation are in the Past tense -the significance of which was well known to Origen; Cf. Ch.1,§4.

170. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVI-XXXVII.

171. or: justify; H. Chadwick's rendering (*op. cit.*, p.189) of the word δικαίωση as "judge" is wrong.

172. *Deut*.32,8-9; cf. *Cels*, V, 25-30.

173. Our italics. Special attention should be paid to the expression "of the whole world" (ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου) as the term κόσμος has a special meaning in Origen; it is in this meaning that the term "cosmos" is being used in the continuation of this passage.

174. *Matt*.8,3.



175. Not of "all men" as H. Chadwick mistakenly translates. (*op. cit.*, p.189). The expression in the original is "καί μετά τό τέλος δικαία περί πάντων κρίσις". There is nowhere any word "man", as Origen refers to judgement of the entire world and not only of human beings. Therefore Chadwick's rendering as "all men" is not only arbitrary but also distorting of Origen's conception of Judgement.

176. *Cels*, IV, 8.

177. *Cels*, IV, 7.

178. This is a point where most clearly Origen enunciates that not only Christ was incarnated once, but also this was an event which took place *once and for all*. He deems that divine dispensation had "reasonable causes" to employ "incarnation"; and he expresses the notion of accomplishing this dispensation by the term ἐνικληρώσαντα (accomplished) which is a Past participle and implies all that Past tense does, namely that this event took place once in the past and the dispensation concerning it has been fulfilled.

179. *Cels*, VI, 78.

180. *ibid.*

181. *commJohn*, 20, XLII.

182. *Cels*, V, 20.

183. *Cels*, IV, 67.

184. Einar Molland, *The Conception of the Gospel in the Alexandrian Theology*, p.162.

185. Jerome, *Apology*, cited in *FP*, p.88, n.4.

186. *Princ.*, II.3.5.

187. H. Puech presents this facet of Origen's thought as a "problem" and eventually he seems to opt for the view that Origen held that the incarnation of Christ was not a unique event throughout all time. This is certainly wrong. What Puech is quite unaware of, however, is that the points which he makes about the Christian view of time are but a mere repetiton of Origen's views, whereas the roughnesses in treating time *in itself* are Puech's own fault. Cf. "Gnosis and Time", pp. 47-50. We discuss this point in chapter 5.

188. It would be not unreasonable to dispute the fidelity of Rufinus' translation at this point. For the expression 'and I do not know whether it is in my power to enumerate all the previous ages in which he did not suffer' is highly unlikely for Origen to use. If all the passages in Greek concerning Incarnation are taken into account, the conclusion could be that Origen strongly holds the uniqueness of Incarnation; therefore he would had never articulated his view as Rufinus renders it, namely in a somewhat ambiguous phraseology. It is obvious that Rufinus tries to defend attacks on the subject (namely, allegations that Origen does not hold

the ἐφ' ὧν incarnation of the Logos, mainly because of his notion of prolongation of time); but Rufinus tries to do so being himself unaware of Origen's authentic views on the subject. Once more, in his effort to render Origen's thought in a way that he deems as appropriate, he creates problems trying to solve problems that do not actually exist in Origen's theology.

189. *Cels*, I, 37.

190. *frLuc*, 34.

191. *Cels*, I, 37.

192. *commJohn*, 1, VI; our italics.

193. *Cels*, V, 19.

194. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.

195. *Cels*, II, 77.

196. *commJohn*, 1, XXXV.

197. *frMatt*, 38 l.

198. *commJohn*, 10, XXIV.

199. *commMatt*, 15, 31.

200. *frLuc*, 34.

201. As discussed in chapter 2, it is due to the conviction of creaturely freedom that the arrangement of future worlds is declared unknown; it is due to the same conviction that the Stoic doctrine of recurrence of identical worlds is strongly rejected.

202. *commJohn*, 1, V.

203. *commJohn*, 1, VI.

204. Here Origen uses the term εὐαγγέλιον in its literal meaning in Greek, namely "announcement of good news".

205. Heb.8,5.

206. Gal.4,2.

207. John,4,24.

208. our italics. *commJohn*, 1, VI.

209. Matt.5,17.

210. *commMatt*, 10, 12.

211. *Cels*, III, 28.

212. *frMatt*, 74.

213. *frMatt*, 227.

214. *selPs*, (M.12.1053). This is from the introductory text of Origen's commentary on Psalms. Here one can see the "selectiveness" of Origen toward pagan philosophy; for it is himself who uses the expression "we have selected ... on the one hand from Aristotle ... and on the other from Herophilus".

215. *selPs*, 76.

216. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVII. The asterisks signify that there is a small lacuna in the Greek passage at this point which, nevertheless, does not cause substantial damage to the conceptual aspect of the text. We note, however that conceptually this small gap could be filled by a passage a little before the above-stated, in the same work. What Origen states there is that there is a divine dispensation which is accomplished *in time*. Thus, on the first day there is the

evil; on the second day consummation takes place; the third is the day of resurrection (*commJohn*, 10,XXXV). What is of importance here is that he regards time as the means through which the divine dispensation is realized. The allegory of the 'days' should not be pressed too much, as the 'second day' is regarded as a time of no-duration at all (s. chapter 2).

217. I Pet.2,5.                      218. Eph.2,20.                      219. I Cor.12,27.

220. Ps.21,15.                      221. Cf. Rev.21,1.                      222. Ez.37,11.

223. Cf. I Cor. 15,55.                      224. Gal.2,20.                      225. Gal.6,14.

226. Rom.6,4.                      227. Rom.6,5.

228. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.

229. He refers to the temple of Solomon, as in John 2,18.

230. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.                      231. Quoting III Kings 6,27.

232. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX.                      233. *selPs*, 23.

234. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVI.

235. An account of this doctrine of Origen's is given in chapter 5 in relation to his eschatological conceptions.

236. *Cels*, II, 77.                      237. *frJohn*, CXL.

238. Cf. Rom. 6,5.    *commJohn*, 2, XXXIII.

239. *frMatt*, 34.

240. *frJohn*, CV -ommenting on John 14,3 and also quoting II Tim.2,12.

241. *frMatt*, 553.                      242. *Princ*, I.2.4.

243. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.

244. *selPs*, 117. We shall give only an example so that the reader can judge the magnitude of absurdities which have been alleged about Origen's thought. M. Werner regards the abandonment of Paul's interpretation of the soteriological significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus as the "decisive moment in the process of de-eschatologizing" [*The Formation of Christian Dogma*, p.72ff]. His view is that within the development of the Catholic Church theology, the crisis reached its zenith in the persons of the Alexandrian Christians, Clement and Origen [*op. cit.*, p.117]. and he goes on thus:

"In the Gnostic schools, in the gnosticising circles of the Church, and especially with the Alexandrian Christians, the principal break with the traditional doctrine of the soteriological significance of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus becomes clearly evident. For the inevitable reconstruction of doctrine by means of

Hellenistic religious philosophy so developed that in the new dogma the soteriological significance of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, in any form, had no part to play." [ *op. cit.*, p.119].

In view of our analyses in this paragraph we need not comment on such claims about Origen's thought. We assume, nevertheless, that the reader can only but deplore the carelessness with which certain scholars have attempted to write the history of development of Christian thought. This is one more point which showing the acute necessity of *quoting* and not just citing crucial passages of Origen, as discussed in the Introduction.

245. *homLuc*, 15. The same notion, namely that out of the passion and resurrection of Jesus an "emancipation" of souls has already taken place, is expressed in *seIPs*, 67: Η καί τό ύψος τοῦ σταυροῦ ῥέγει, ἐν ᾧ ἀναβάς καί τοὺς ἐν ἀέρι δαίμονας καί τὰ πνεύματα τῆς πονηρίας ἀφ' ἧς εἶχον υπερηφανίας κατασπάσας, τάς ὑπ' αὐτῶν αἰχμαλωτισθείσας ψυχάς διά τῶν πονηρῶν πράξεων, καί ἀπό θεοῦ ἀποστάσας, καθάπερ τινά αἰχμαλωσίαν ἀπό τῶν ἄδου κευθμῶνων ἀνεῤκύσας ἠλευθέρωσεν.

246. *frMatt*, 57.

247. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.

248. *frMatt*, 21.

249. Heb.1,9. *Cels*, VI, 79.

250. *homLuc*, 15.

251. *ibid.*

252. *homJer*, 5, 5.

253. Gal.5,17.

254. *Cels*, III, 28.

255. *frMatt*, 227.

256. *seIPs*, 76.

257. *Cels*, VI, 79. We endorse the criticism of H. Crouzel against R. Hanson's *Allegory and Event*, namely Hanson's failure to grasp the meaning of the incarnation and history in Origen. Cf. H. Crouzel, "Origène devant l' Incarnation et devant l' Histoire", *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, 1960, pp.81-110.

258. Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Catechetica*, 32.

259. Namely the meaning of the term εὐαγγέλιον as "announcement of things gladdening him who hears them, once he has accepted that which is announced"; *commJohn*, 1, V.

260. *commJohn*, 1, V; our italics.

261. *Cels*, II, 77. For he *once* (ἀνάξ) both rose again and *convinced* his disciples about his resurrection, and convinced them to such an extent that they show to all men by their sufferings that they are looking for eternal life and for

*the resurrection which has been exemplified* (υποδειχμένην) before them in word and deed, and that they deride all the troubles of life."

262. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV. Why Origen calls this resurrection as "perfect" and what is it distinguished from, will be discussed in chapter 5.

263. *commJohn*, 1, VII.

264. *selLev*, (M.12.397ff).

265. Cf. *Cels*, II, 77.

266. *selLev*.

267. *commMatt*, 15, 35.

268. *commMatt*, 12, 34.

269. *selPs*, 48.

270. *Cels*, II, 38; s. also *Cels*, IV, 38; VI, 20; *commMatt*, 17, 33.

271. *commJohn*, 10, XXV.

272. *selJob*, 35.

273. *frMatt*, 135.

274. *frMatt*, 152.

275. Luke, 16, 25. *excPs*, 36.

276. *selPs*, 36.

277. *selPs*, 61.

278. *selLev*.

279. *ibid*.

280. *commJohn*, 1, VII.

281. *commJohn*, 1, VIII.

282. *ibid*.

283. *selEz*, 17; s. also chapter 5.

284. Gen. 6, 13ff. *commJohn*, 20, IV.

285. *Princ*, III.5.3.

286. *Cels*, V, 59.

287. *Princ*, III.6.8. Here is one more proof for our remark in chapter 1, according to which the statements in *Princ*, III.5.2-4 are but interpolations of Rufinus. Whereas at that point is stated that the narration in Genesis does not indicate the very beginning of creation, but only the creation of the present world, in *Princ*, III.6.8 it is asserted that this narration is "referring to the beginning of the entire creation". Thus there is a gross contradiction into the same work and, indeed, into the same Book (the Third) of this work. Origen was not the kind of thinker to contradict himself -least of all so grossly and in the same work. Rufinus made his interpolations which have rendered a text in which certainly this discrepancy is not the only one.

288. *commJohn*, 13, XLVI; 13, XLVIII.

289. *expProv*, 19.

290. *selEz*, 6.

291. *frMatt*, 5.

292. Cf. Heb. 4, 9.

293. Deut. 16, 16.

294. *deOr*, XXVII, 16.

295. Gal. 4, 10.

296. Heb. 10, 1.

297. Ex. 12: 2, 3, 6, 15, 18.

298. Heb.10,1.

299. Hos.14,9.

300. James,2,23.

301. Deut.16,9.

302. Lev.16,29ff.

303. Lev.23:24,27.

304. Cf. I Cor. 2,16.

305. Cf. Ex.21,2; Lev.25: 4-7, 10-17; Deut.15: 1-3.

306. Cf. Lev.25:8 ff; 27:17 ff.

307. Rom.11,33. *deOr*, XXVII, 14. Without reflecting on Origen's conception of time at all, J. Daniélou has considered this passage out of its context and alleged that "the totality of Time" in Origen is consisted of "the jubilee of aeonian years" and he thinks that in this, too, he has been "anticipated by the Gnostics."; Cf. *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, tr. J.A.Baker, London, 1973; p.496. We made a hint about this in chapter 2,§2. In view of our analyses here it is obvious that Daniélou was entirely unaware of Origen's conception of time. Anyway, Origen speaks allegorically of "week of aeons" and "month of aeons" and "year of aeons" also in *deOr*, XXVII, 16 and in *commMatt*, 15,31.

308. *commMatt*, 15, 31.

309. *ibid*.

310. *Cels*, V, 59.

311. *selGen*. (M.12.92ff).

312. *Cels*, IV, 59.

313. *Princ*, II.3.6.

314. *Cels*, VI, 60 and 61.

315. *homJer*, 16,9.

316. *Cels*, IV, 31.

317. *frMatt*, 383; a similar view is found in *frMatt*, 4.

318. Cf. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, tr. J. Moreau from the German 2nd edition with revisions to 1960, pp. 125-6; Quite rightly Boman argues that "Cullmann is wrong if he thinks that the difference between the biblical and Greek conceptions of time consists in the fact the biblical time is linear and the Greek cyclic ... our grammatical tense -or time- conception is always what Cullmann designates by the misleading expression *linear*, while objective, astronomical time is always cyclic."; (*op. cit.*, p.162.).

319. Cf. J. Marsh, *The Fulness of Time*, London, 1952; pp.176ff.

320. O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, p.67.

321. s. *homJer*, 9,1; *selLev*; *commGen*, 3; and *passim*

322. *Cels*, II, 16; IV, 19; *commJohn*, 10, VI; Cf. also, *Princ*, I.Pref.4; "And this Jesus Christ was born and suffered in truth and not merely in

appearance, and truly died our common death." Cf. also *Princ*, II.6.3.

323. *Cels*, VI, 78 and 79.

324. *homJer*, 14,6.

325. Origen rejects what he calls "the mythology about aeons" (τὴν περὶ τῶν αἰώνων μυθολογίαν) (*commMatt*, 17, 33) obviously alluding to the tales of the Gnostics and explicitly rebuking them in other cases; s. also, *Cels*, V, 61; *commJohn*, 2, XXIV.

326. O. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.68.

327. Cf. Gen.49,10.

328. Cf. Rom.1,3. *frJohn*, LVIII -commenting on John,4,22, "for salvation is of the Jews".

329. E. de Faye, "De l' Influence du Gnosticisme chez Origène", *Revue de l' Histoire des Religions*, II, (1957), p.222.

330. A. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, Vol.I (Tübingen, 5th ed., 1931), pp.250; 253, n.1; 266; 267; 269. F.C. Burkitt, *Church and Gnosis* (Cambridge, 1932); H.H. Schaeder, "Bardesanes von Edessa", *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LI (1932). As Harnack points out (Vol. I, p.250, n.1), the conception of Gnosticism as "the acute secularization, or Hellenization of Christianity" goes back to Franz Overbeck, *Studien zur Geschichte der alten Kirche* (Chemnitz, 1875), p. 184. Cited in H.C. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", p.56, n.21.

331. Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, I,22,8.

332. Jerome, *EpAv*, 12; cited in *FP*, p.309, n.7.

333. Cf. Gal.3,24.

334. Cf. Rev.14,6; Heb. 9,15: 12,24: 8,13. *Princ*, III.6.8.

335. Cf. Phil.2,7.

336. Cf. Matt.16,27.

337. Cf. Rev.14,6.

338. Cf. Heb.10,1.

339. Lament. 4,20.

340. *Princ*, IV.3.13.

341. *commJohn*, 1, XXXV.

342. Heb.2,9.

343. *commJohn*, 1, XXXV.

344. *homLuc*, 10.

345. Cf. Eph.4,9.

346. *commJohn*, 19, XX.

347. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVI-XXXVII; s. also *frJohn*, XC. This affirmation needs particular attention, because there are many misunderstandings surrounding

Origen's thought on this point. He devotes a whole paragraph in *commJohn* in order to make clear that the Jesus' saying "To finish his work" [John, 4,34] does not imply that what was made by God in the beginning was "imperfect". For "it is absurd to say that the Father has been a creator of something imperfect, and the saviour has made perfect the imperfect, because it was made imperfect" [*commJohn*, 13,XXXVI-XXXVII]. That saying of Jesus denotes a "deeper mystery" on which Origen makes a few suggestions further on. Thus, assertions that Origen held that the creatures created by God were "incomplete" are totally wrong. This mistake is usually combined with the erroneous presupposition that Origen held a "doctrine of eternal creation".

As an example we adduce here the following allegation of R. Norris: "To be a creature, then is to be 'originate', and in this sense generate. But this implies, as we have seen, something further about the character or nature of creatures. It suggests that they must be regarded as in themselves incomplete -eternally unfinished and eternally created." (*op. cit.*, p.151). Such views are but an utterly gross distortion of Origen's real views. In fact they have nothing to do with Origen's thought. In his obsession with attributing Neoplatonic views to Origen, R. Norris is entirely unaware of the fact that he attributes to Origen *exactly the opposite* views of those that he really held. This serious mistake is directly related to Norris' assertion (s. chapter 1, §4) that the affirmation about creatures having a "beginning" implies that the relation of creatures to the Father is the same to the relation of the Logos to the Father (*op. cit.*, p.151); the only difference is that the Logos is perfect whereas the creatures are "eternally unfinished" as they are "eternally created" in like a manner that the Son is "eternally generated" by the Father. The distortion of Origen's views is serious indeed.

348. *commMatt*, 17, 19.

349. *commJohn*, 1, VII.

350. *commJohn*, 1, VIII.

351. *ibid.*

352. *commMatt*, 16, 22.

353. *commJohn*, 6, IV.

354. *Cels*, III, 38; IV, 69; VI, 79.

355. *commMatt*, 16, 23. Thus "soul is by nature a holy place of God" because "there is a holy remnant in our soul". s. also *selPs*, 45; *commMatt*, 16,23; *fr 1-71Jer*, XXII; *commJohn*, 10, XXIV. What is characteristic here is that Origen again states his view that "salvation" out of the incarnation of Christ pertains not only to the "soul", but also to "more" (πλεόνων), alludings to the beings of the other ranks of life, and that the "service to God" takes place



according to "heavenly and spiritual laws" alluding to the notion of "eternal gospel".

356. *commMatt*, 16, 23; 16, 24.

357. Cf. *commJohn*, 32, III.

358. Quoting I Tim. 2,8. *Cels*, VII, 44.

359. *commMatt*, 10, 2.

360. *commMatt*, 16, 20.

361. *commMatt*, 16, 21; s. also *commJohn*, 6, LIX.

362. *commJohn*, 6, LIX; s. also *seIPs*, 23.

363. *Cels*, VII, 36; *commJohn*, 2, XVII.

364. *fr 1-71Jer*, XXII.

365. Cf. *Cels*, IV, 21 and *Cels*, VI, 71.

366. *commJohn*, 20, XII.

367. Fragment 30 Koetschau; *libOr*, Mansi IX.532. In *Princ*, IV.3.13. A similar passage is found in Jerome, *epAv*, 12.

368. See also Theophilus Alex. "Ep. synod 4 (Jerome, *epAv*, 92) and "Ep. pasch. I.10,11 (Jerome, *epAv*, 96)". Cited in *FP*, p.310, n.3.

369. Using the phraseology of Heb.6,4-6.

370. Gal.2,19. The phrase "I will be crucified from above" (ἀνωθεν μέλλω σταυρούσθαι) is not a scriptural one. It is supposed to have been uttered by Jesus and is stated in a work entitled "Acts of Paul", as Origen himself explains at this point of *commJohn*. This is why Origen is not categorical on that this phrase has actually been said by Jesus. His diffidence on the point is obvious and this is why he speaks about those who "want to accept" that this "has been said by the saviour". (εἰ τῷ δέ φίλον παραδέξασθαι τὸ ἐν ταῖς Παύλου Πράξεσιν ἀναγεγραμμένον ὡς ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος εἰρημένον). He does not take the view that this has *actually* been said by Jesus. The point which Origen wants to make, however, is *exactly the opposite* of that of which Justinian and Jerome accused him: Even if this phrase has really been said by Jesus, this by no means puts the uniqueness of Incarnation in question. For the point which Origen makes perfectly clear is that in no case another "crucifixion" of Christ means another incarnation.

371. Gal.2,20.

372. Cf. Rom.6,4.

373. *commJohn*, 20, XII.

374. Jerome, *Apology*, I.20; cited in *FP*, p.88, n.4.

375. *homJer*, 14,6.

376. *homJer*, 14, 7.

377. Col.1,18.

378. *Cels*, VI, 79; s. also §2 in this chapter where we discuss how Origen

understands the "mystery" (*commJohn* 10,XXXV) of passion and resurrection *after* the resurrection of Jesus until the final resurrection.

379. *Matt*.27,17-18.

380. *Cels*, Pref., II.

381. *frJohn*, XIX.

382. I Cor. 15,49.

383. *homJer*, 14, 7-8.

384. *homJer*, 14, 17.

385. Is.50,6.

386. *homJer*, 19, 13.

387. Cf. II Cor. 12,9.

388. I Cor.1,24.

389. *commJohn*, 20, XXXVII.

390. *homJer*, 15, 3.

391. *deOr*, X, 2.

392. *frMatt*, 484. Οί γάρ τού σωτήρος λόχοι αεί τά οικεία ενεργήσουσιν ὡς τέλειοι καί οὐκ επιδεχόμενοι βελτίους γενέσθαι παρελθόντες ὁ εἰσίν. ἀλλ' ὁ ουρανός μέν καί ἡ γή παπελεύσονται, οἱ δέ λόχοι αὐτοῦ μενούσι, λόχοι ὄντες τού δι' οὐ τά πάντα ἐγένετο.

393. *expProv*, 6.

394. Jerome, *epAv*, 12; cited in *FP*, p.309, n.7.

395. L. and S., p.21.

396. *frMatt*, 38 I and 38 II.

397. s. *selPs*, 48: Τέλος δέ νοήσεις τόν μέλλοντα αἰῶνα, ὅστις ἐστί τέλος τού παρόντος. (As *end* you should understand the future aeon which is the end of the present one.).

398. Dan. (Sus.), 42.

399. *commMatt*, 13, 1. In this passage one can see that, in Origen's view, *prophecy* pertains chiefly to the eschatological perspectives of the world (see S2 in this chapter), namely to the final goal of free moral action as well as to the end of the world itself. If Origen held a just short-sighted conception of prophecy, then a notion of infinity of the world would not render prophecy impossible; but in that case prophecy would be just a prediction uttered at one time and realized at a future moment; such a prediction would make no difference from Greek oracles or other pagan predictions. Even those prophecies of Jewish prophets concerning their historical perspectives at a certain time, are not just predictions of historical events but they are understood as placed in the whole process of acting in dialectical relation to the will of God. As we discuss further in this paragraph, Origen strongly rejects those pagan oracles. What the passage above shows is that it is mainly on the ground of the *eschatological direction of the world* in time that he draws a clear line between biblical prophecy and pagan oracles. Thus the notion of prophecy is understood as a decisive factor in the

establishment of a philosophy of history pertaining to the perspectives of the entire world.

400. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.198; his italics. As regards our topic, R. Sorabji makes two fundamental mistakes throughout the above-mentioned work. First, he attributes views of Origen to Gregory of Nyssa, as appearing for the first time, and is unaware of the fact that Gregory just echoes the views of Origen. In one particular case he postulates such views of Gregory as an "*answer*" to Origen (*op. cit.*, p.151; his italics) Secondly, Sorabji is unaware of the fact that the fundamental conceptions of time and divine being (as well as the terminology used) in Philoponus, again, are but mere (yet not always perfect) repetitions of Origen's views. We discuss these assertions of Sorabji's in due course in this work.

401. *commGen*, 3.

402. *Princ*, III.5.1.

403. *Cels*, IV, 79.

404. *Cels*, IV, 9.

405. *frMatt*, 21.

406. *frMatt*, 57.

407. R. Hanson, *Allegory and event*, London, 1959; pp.364ff.

408. H. Koch, *Pronoia und Paideusis*, Leipsig, Berlin, 1932; pp.89ff.

409. J. Danielou, *Origen*, tr. W. Mitchell, London, 1955; p.312.

410. H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L' Intelligence de l' Ecriture d' après Origène*. Paris, 1950; p.70.

411. M. Harl, *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe Incarné*; Paris, 1958; p.353.

412. *selPs*, (introductory text, *loc. cit.* ). Cf. §2 in this chapter.

413. *commJohn*, 1, VI; s. also *Princ*, III.1.16.

414. Cf. Exod.7,8. *Cels*, II, 50; our italics.

415. *Cels*, II, 52; our italics.

416. s. also *Cels*, III,25; IV,96.

417. *Cels*, VI, 10.

418. *Cels*, III, 3.

419. Cf. Wis. 7,27. *Cels*, IV, 3.

420. *selDeut*.

421. *Princ*, IV.2.7; τοὺς διακόνους τῆς ἀληθείας, προφῆτας καὶ αποστόλους.

422. *Cels*, VI, 45.

423. Cf. Joshua 13,22.

424. *frJohn*, LXXXV.

425. *selNum*, (commenting on Num.24,7).

426. *commJohn*, 1, VI; 16, 335,29ff.

427. *commJohn*, 1, VI; s. also *homJer*, 1,3.

428. *Cels*, VII, 4.

429. That is, Zeus: Homer, *Ilias*, 15,234-5. *Cels*, VII, 6.

430. This affirmation is quite frequently found in Origen's works. Cf. *exhMar*, XXXII; *Cels*, IV, 29; VII, 4; Also, R.P. Lawson, *Origen: The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, p.35; etc. The scriptural authority, to which Origen appeals, is the passage in Psalms, 95,5.

431. Numb.23,23.

432. *fr1-71Jer*, XLIX.

433. *Cels*, VII, 7.

434. *homJer*, 15, 1.

435. *commJohn*, 1, VI.

436. *homJer*, 1, 3.

437. Jer.18: 8,10. *homJer*, 18,5.

438. *seIEz*, 2.

439. *commGen*, 3.

440. *ibid*.

441. *fr1-71Jer*, XLIX.

442. *seIDeut*. our italics. Επειδή ὁ μὲν θεὸς τὴν δύναμιν ἀπεκάλυπτεν' ὁ δὲ προφήτης τῇ αὐτοῦ γλώσσει ἐκέχρητο πρὸς παράστασιν τῶν δεδηλωμένων. Κίνησις οὖν λέγεται ἡ προφητικὴ φωνή, οἷα παριστώσα τὰ ὑπὸ θεοῦ εἰρημένα. (commenting on Deut. 1,3).

443. Cf. *Princ*, I.2.2.

444. *Princ*, IV.4.8.

445. *Princ*, III.3.3.

446. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.

447. *Cels*, V, 51.

448. *Cels*, II, 77.

449. *Princ*, III.5.5.

450. *commJohn*, 20, XIII.

451. O.Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, p.55ff.

452. *frLuc*, 34.

453. *Princ*, III.1.14. Απειροὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν, ὥς ἂν εἶποι τις, αἱ ψυχαί, καὶ ἀπειρα τὰ τούτων ἡθῆ, καὶ πλείστα ὅσα κινήματα καὶ αἱ πρόθέσεις καὶ αἱ ἐπιβολαί καὶ αἱ ὀρμαί' ὧν εἰς μόνος οἰκονόμος ἄριστος, καὶ τοὺς καιροὺς ἐπιστάμενος καὶ τὰ ἀρμόζοντα βοηθήματα καὶ τὰς ἀγωγὰς καὶ τὰς οδοὺς, ὁ τῶν ὅλων θεὸς καὶ πατήρ...

454. *commMatt*, 17, 9. Τοῦ δεσπότου δέ ἐστι «μόνου» καὶ τῆς θείας ἐπιστήμης αὐτοῦ τό εἰδέναι τὸν ἐκάστου τῶν ἀνθρώπων καιρὸν, πότε ἤρχισεν καὶ πότε πόρρω ἐστὶν ὁ καιρὸς τῶν καρπῶν.

455. *Cels*, III, 38.

456. Jerome, *epAv*, 9; cited in *FP*, p.240, n.3.

457. Jerome, *epAv*, 9; *loc. cit.*, p.241, n.6.

458. Cf. Heb.1,14.

459. *commGen*, 3.

460. *ibid.*

461. *commJohn*, 13, L.

462. *commGen*, 3.

463. *commMatt*, 17, 9. s. also, *frJohn*, LXI.

464. *Cels*, IV, 69.

465. *commEx*; our italics.

466. *commJohn*, 1, VII. At that point Origen refers to the incarnation of Christ, stating that this took place at that time and not before because he was waiting for the appropriate preparation to take place so that the people who would live thereafter could be able to apprehend that he was the Logos of God who was incarnated into history.

467. *commJohn*, 13, XLVIII.

468. *ibid.*

469. *Princ*, III.1.14.

470. *Cels*, VI, 79.

471. *homJer*, 18, 5.

472. *Cels*, VI, 45.

473. *Cels*, II, 3.

474. *deOr*, II, 1.

475. *homJer*, 1, 3.

476. *commMatt*, 17, 6 -quoting Matt.21,33-43.

477. *commJohn*, 13, XLVI -quoting John 4,36.

478. Cf. John,1,14.

479. *homJer*, 18, 5.

480. Cf. *Cels*, VI, 79.

481. *commJohn*, 1, VI.

482. *commJohn*, 13, XLVI -using the phraseology of I Peter, 1, 20.

483. *Cels*, VI, 46.

484. *Cels*, II, 10; also in *Cels*, I, 61.

485. *Cels*, V, 19. The term ἐκάστω should be rendered as "for every one" and not "for each man" as H. Chadwick translates (*op. cit.*, p.278). Here again Chadwick renders the as if Origen held the divine-creaturely relation in terms of God-man and not God-rational creatures; and this, against what is stated in the original text of *Cels* itself.

486. *commJohn*, 13, XXXII.

487. *deOr*, II, 1.

488. *commJohn*, 32, III.

489. Ecc1.3,1.

490. Ecc1.3,5.

491. Heb.6,1.

492. *commMatt*, 10,10.

493. As we argue in this paragraph, the notion of *kairos* refers not only to human beings but also to beings of ranks of life either higher or lower than the human one. Angels, for instance, act in time and at the appropriate "kairoi" by "reading" the "book of God", that is the positions of the heavenly bodies, and perceiving when they should carry out a certain task vis-à-vis human beings.

494. Princ, IV.2.7.

495. *enarrJob*, 27.

496. *enarrJob*, 32.

497. Using a phraseology as in I Cor.4,1.

498. *commJohn*, 20, 11.

499. *commJohn*, 1, VIII. In Greek, the term for "beautiful" is *oreos* (ωραίος) and this term is directly derived from a notion of time. For *oreos* is what is "in its *ora* (ώρα; hour)" and, since it is in its *ora*, it is *orimon* (ώριμον; mature). Departing from the observation of nature, namely fruits, in Greek the terms for "beautiful" (*oreos*; ωραίος) and "mature" (*orimos*; ώριμος) come directly from the term "hour" (*ora*; ώρα). What is "in its hour" is "mature" and therefore it is "beautiful". Thus it is very understandable that, in the above-mentioned expression, Origen, who had a very good command of the Greek language, directly relates the term "beautiful" to what is "done at the appropriate *kairos*".

500. *commMatt*, 16, 1.

501. *ibid*.

502. Matt.10,23.

503. *Cels*, I, 65.

504. Phil.3,8.

505. Cf. Heb.10,1. *Cels*, II,2. The same notion of "more opportune time" Origen uses in *commMatt*, on the same subject as above, namely quoting Matt.16,20; s. *commMatt*, 12, 17.

506. Quoting Matt.14,15.

507. *commMatt*, 11,1.

508. *commMatt*, 16,1.

509. *deOr*, VI, 4.

510. *seJud*, -quoting Ps. 74,3. (M.12.949).

511. *seIPs*, 1 -quoting Ps.1,3.

512. *Cant*, 4; Cf. chapter 4.

513. *commMatt*, 15, 34.

514. *commMatt*, 15, 35.

515. *ibid*.

516. *commMatt*, 15, 35. In this passage we can also find Origen's conviction that faith and life in church may produce an existential realization of future in the present. Thus he allegorically regards "day" as a man's lifetime (*commMatt*, 15, 36); in that case "vineyard" is the "church of God" (*commMatt*, 15, 37); nevertheless it is the allegorical method itself which allows Origen at another point to regard "day" as the whole of time (*commMatt*, 15,31) and "vineyard" as

the kingdom of God, namely the actual eschatological reality, as the final goal and perspective of striving in time (*commMatt* 15, 35).

517. *deOr*, XXVII, 16; s. also *commMatt*, 15, 31.

518. *deOr*, XXVII, 16.

519. In Plato the word for "place" (*hōra*-χώρα) actually means "space" (*horos*-χώρος); at any rate, the root of the Greek words for both "place" and "space" is the same.

520. *commJohn*, 13, XIII, using the language of Gal.4,4.

521. Cf. *frJohn*, LXXX.

522. *commJohn*, 20 XIII.

523. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.58.

524. J. Marsh, *The Fulness of Time*, London, 1952; pp.175-6.

525. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", p.46.

526. Nevertheless it is another question whether or not, in such a case, one may speak of "cyclical time" in itself. For it is one thing to speak of "cyclical" or "anacyclogical" *view* of time; but to speak of "cyclical time" is quite another. W. Kneale has asserted that temporal order is not cyclical; Cf. "Time and Eternity in Theology", *Proceedings from the Aristotelian Society*, LXI (1960-1), pp.91-2. A major difficulty is to distinguish *time* from *change*. Pythagoreans held that it is possible to speak of "cyclic time" [Eudemus *apud* Simplicius, in *Aristotelis Physicorum Commentaria*, 732, 30 (DK58B34) quoted by G. Kirk and J. Raven in *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge, 1957), §272. It is due to this Pythagorean view that Origen rebukes them by name [s. ch.3,§1]. J. Lucas develops an arguments according to which there is no cyclic time: If time really were cyclic, there would be no recurrence of events, he argues. For when events *re-cur*, they actually *re-peat* themselves; his conclusion is that "cyclic time is static time, and static time is no time" [J. Lucas, *A Treatise on Time and Space*, London, 1976, p.57-60]. s. further H. Reichenbach, *Space and Time*, New York, 1957, ch.II, §21, pp.141-3; M. Cleugh, *Time*, London, 1937, p.225; G. Whitrow, *The Natural Philosophy of Time*, Edinburgh, 1961, pp. 40-1 and 259-60. In a more Mathematical way the problem is treated by T. Chapman, *Time: A Philosophical Analysis*, D. Reidel Publishing Co.,1982, pp.62-85. Similarly, A. Grünbaum, "The Status of Temporal Becoming", *The Philosophy of Time*, ed. R. Gale, New York, 1967, pp.322-353; by the same author, "The Nature of Time", in the *Frontiers of Science and Philosophy*, ed. R. Colodny, London, 1964, pp.147-88; H. Mehlberg, "Philosophical Laws of Physical Time", *The Monist*, January 1969, vol.53, n.1, pp.340-84, p.363. We have already pointed out that the notion of "cyclical time"

does not render anyone of the Greek conceptions of it. On this point we can endorse J. Lucas' arguments.

527. Cf. *commJohn*, 1,XXV; 1,XXVI; *Cels*, IV,30; IV,74; *deOr*, VI,1; *commMatt*, 10,11; *selJob*, 35; *Princ*, II.1.1.; II.9.3.; III.1.1.

528. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", pp.52-3.

529. J. Daniélou, *Origène*, (Paris,1948), pp.137-98 and *Sacramentum futuri. Etudes sur les origines de la typologie biblique*, (Paris, 1950).

530. H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L' Intelligence de l' Ecriture d' après Origène*, (Paris, 1950), pp. 267-94.

531. In this sense, space is certainly continuous, as time is continuous in itself and, therefore, the whole of space-time is continuous, too.

#### Notes to Chapter 4.

1. *Princ*, II.3.6.

2. *Princ*, II.3.6.

3. *Cels*, VI, 21; VI, 23.

4. *excPs*, 17. It is then obvious that the reference in the *Princ* about "seven heavens" has been largely modified (if not entirely interpolated) by Rufinus.

5. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI.

6. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

7. Gen.28,12-13.

8. *Cels*, VI, 21.

9. Exod. 3,8; Deut.8,8; Jerem.11,19; Ps.27,13; 142,5.

10. Luke,10,20.

11. Matt.5,4.

12. *Princ*, II.3.6. At this point, it is obvious that Rufinus has confused Origen's authentic conception of the world in itself as well as its relation to the divine reality. Although the Greek passages demonstrate that Origen draws a clear and decisive line between the world and the transcendent God, at this point Rufinus presents Origen as rather uncertain about this radical *hiatus* between God and the world. This is a misleading rendering of Origen's thought, as there is abundance of passages in Greek where Origen explicitly enunciates his views on the subject. This particular point of the *Princ* may well be elucidated by Origen's views as stated in *commJohn* (19, XX), where the radical transcendence of divine reality to the world is clearly enunciated.

13. s. Gen.1,10; also *On Psalms Homiliae*, 2,4.

14. Cited in *FP*, p.91, n.6, from *On Psalm. Hom.* II.4.



15. Gen.1,1.

16. *Princ*, III.6.8. Cf. Deut.4,38; Ps. 37,11; Matt.5,4; Heb. 4,9. This is one more poin in *Princ* showing Rufinus' ignorance of Origen's eschatological views. Here he has confused the notion of eternal life (as a kind of "end"; s. *infra*) with the conception of the absolute end (which will be discussed in chapter 5). Hence this paragraph begins with reference to "the consummation of all things" (namely, the absolute end) and continues with descriptions applying to eternal life -which is a different conception, as we shall see shortly below. It is not surprising that many scholars assert that Origen's eschatology is "notoriously" obscure (Cf. P. Plass. *loc. cit.*). Once the study of Origen's thought is confined into the contradictory text of the Latin rendering of *Princ* such a conclusion is inevitable. However, in this chapter, as well as in chapter 5, we shall show that Origen held crystal clear eschatological ideas.

17. *Princ*, II.3.6.

18. II Cor.4,18; 5,1.

19. Ps. 8, 4.

20. Is.65,2.

21. *Princ*, II.3.6.

22. Matt.5:5,3.

23. Ps.37,34.

24. *Princ*, II.3.7.

25. Cf. Luke 17,21, s. *frMatt*, 74.

26. *Princ*, II.3.7.

27. *frMatt*, 38 II; also *frMatt*, 75.

28. *frMatt*, 75.

29. *frMatt*, 74.

30. *frMatt*, 75; s. also *commMatt*, 10,14; 12,14; *homJer*, 14,17; *selPs*, 9; *deOr*, XXV,1-3.

31. *selPs*, 142. The notion of "contemplation" with respect to eternal life is discussed in the §2 in this chapter.

32. s. Matt.3,2; 4,17.

33. s. Luke 6,20; John 3:3,5.

34. *frJohn*, XXXVI.

35. *selDeut*, (commenting on Deut. 8, 7).

36. *ibid*.

37. *homJer*, 14, 17.

38. Cf. Is.66, 52. *commMatt*, 17, 33.

39. *commMatt*, 17, 33.

40. *Cels*, VII, 31.

41. Cf. *homLuc*, 15. ὡς ἐ δόξα, ἐκεῖ ἀποκάλυψις.

42. *deOr*, XXIII, 4.

43. *Dial*, (BGF, p.379).

44. *Cels*, VI, 69. This expression is reminiscent of Plato, *Phaedrus* 247C -and Origen is aware of that, as himeself points out in 10,74,13ff. Cf. also *Republic* 582C, Aristotle *Physics* 209b20. The distinction of Origen's conception of eternal

life from the Greek thought is discussed later in this chapter.

45. *commJohn*, 19, XX.
46. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.
47. *Princ*, II.3.7.
48. *seIPs*, 14; our italics.
49. Phil.3,14. *seIPs*, 23; our italics.
50. *ibid*.
51. Cf. Ps.26,13. *frMatt*, 82.
52. *Cels*, VI, 44.
53. *Cels*, VI, 20.
54. *Cels*, VI, 59.
55. Quoting Ps.26,5.
56. *seIPs*, 26.
57. *seIPs*, 23.
58. *s. supra*.
59. *Princ*, II.3.7.
60. *commJohn*, 13, XLVI. τοῦ ἀμειβομένου θεοῦ εἰς ἓν πάντας τέλους συνάγοντος.
61. *commJohn*, 13, XLVIII.
62. Ps.48,10. We discuss the actual meaning of this "knowledge" later in this chapter.
63. *seIPs*, 48.
64. *seIPs*, 48; Here Origen implicitly refers to the Aristotelian view and rejects it. *s. also frMatt*, 383.
65. Eccl.12,14.
66. *seIPs*, 139.
67. *seIPs*, 4.
68. *seIPs*, 118.
69. *frMatt*, 383; *commMatt*, 14, 5.
70. *commJohn*, 13, XLIX.
71. *s. commMatt*, 12, 26; *seIPs*, 41.
72. *seIPs*, 23.
73. *frMatt*, 233.
74. *Cels*, V, 24. H. Chadwick's translation of "αἰώνιον" as "everlasting" (*op. cit.*, p.282) is not correct. Here Origen alludes to the character of eternal life as a different particular "space" of the world. In *Cels*, VII, 28, he uses the same word, namely βιοτήν as found in Homer (*Odyssea*, IV,563-5), in order to indicate the spatio-temporal character of this particular world.
75. *Cels*, VI, 59.
76. The translation of the term *πρόσκαιρος* as "temporal" by H. Chadwick (*op. cit.*, p.332) is not correct; for *πρόσκαιρος* does not denote the category of just "being in time" and thus being "temporal", but it means "to last for a time" and thus to be "temporary" and therefore "transient". This sense of *πρόσκαιρος* has

remained unchanged throughout the centuries and it is exactly in this sense that it is currently used in Modern Greek. Beyond that, H.G.Liddell and R. Scott in their *Greek-English Lexicon* (p.1515) provide this correct translation of *πρόσκαιρος* and cite relevant passages from ancient writings in Greek. It is quite remarkable that, among those citations, the above stated passage of Paul's is adduced as an example where the term *πρόσκαιρος* means "lasting for a time" and thus "temporary".

77. II Cor.4: 17- 18.

78. The translation of H. Chadwick here may lead to serious misunderstandings of Origen's thought with respect to questions directly related to our topic and already discussed in the previous chapters. Thus H. Chadwick uses the terms "sensible world" and "intelligible world", although Origen himself nowhere uses the term "world" whatsoever. This certainly is not incidental and we already have discussed how cautious Origen is in using his language. What we have here is the distinction between the notions of "sensible", "not seen" and "invisible", as discussed in chapter 1. A painstaking reading of the passage shows the consistency of Origen in his view that what is "invisible" (that is, incorporeal) is "not seen" -but what is "not seen" is not necessarily "invisible". H. Chadwick's translation might well lead to the seriously misleading conclusion that Origen holds a notion of dualism between "sensible world" and "intelligible world". As we discussed in chapter 1, such a notion is absolutely alien to Origen's thought.

79. Heb.4,14.

80. John,14,3.

81. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247B.

82. John,4,14.

83. John,7,38; Ps.148, 4.

84. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247C.

85. Rom.1,20. Apart from our dissent from the translation of *πρόσκαιρος* and one or two other points, the translation of this passage is from H. Chadwick's *Origen, Contra Celsum*. We regard the expression "invisible things" [of God] as inaccurate. In the Greek text of the Epistle of Paul there is no word for "things" whatsoever. There is only the term *τὰ ἀόρατα* (the invisible) without any noun at all. We understand that modern translations have adopted the term "attributes" instead of "things". However, we regard this as unsatisfactory, too, particularly because it could create misunderstandings with respect to Origen's conception of God Himself as well as His relation to creation. Hence at this point we just keep H. Chadwick's translation, although with reluctance and being conscious of the arguments that this rendering may raise -and indeed raises.

86. I Cor. 8: 12,10. *Cels*, VI, 19-20.

87. Wis.9,15.

88. Cf. Ps.18,8; Eph.1.18. *exhMar*, XLVII. This statement should be considered within its context. Origen wrote the *exhMar* as a consolation and support of the morale for his friend Ambrose, at a time when the latter was persecuted and imprisoned for his faith. In his tendency to console and boost his friend psychologically, Origen appears to devalue the body. However, as we discuss later, his view is not as simple as it appears here. The *body* plays a crucial role (indeed as significant as that of the *soul*) in the process towards the eschatological perspectives of human beings. s. *infra*.

89. s. also *seIPs*, 8; *seIPs*, 22; *expProv*, 14.

90. *seIPs*, 142.

91. *commMatt*, 12, 36-43.

92. Origen expounds this view in *seIPs*, 22.

93. *frJohn*, XIII; *exhMar*, XIII; *deOr*, I; XVII,1; On human corporeality, s. *Cels*, II,65; II,66; VI,17; VII,62; *commMatt*, 12,6.

94. *Dial*, (BGF, p.379).

95. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.151.

96. This mistake again stems from the fact that Sorabji uses the *Princ* as his main source, not only there but throughout his book. Henceforth any miscomprehension of Origen's thought is subsequent to this original mistake.

97. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII.

98. *commJohn*, 2, XXVIII.

99. *commJohn*, 13, III.

100. R. Sorabji, *op. cit.*, p.150-1.

101. *op. cit.*, p.151; his italics.

102. *Cels*, VII, 62. This affirmation of Origen should be understood in the context of his views of God Himself, as discussed in chapter 1; that is, when God "manifests" Himself he does not appear as he really is but he appears according to his οὐκονομία, so that he can be comprehended by creatures.

103. *expProv*, 24; ἐν δὲ τῷ μέλλοντι <αἰώνι> ἢ παρὰ τοῦ Κυρίου διανομή.

104. s. also *commJohn*, 13, XVIII; 19, XIV; *enarrJob*, 39.

105. I Cor.13,12; s. *commJohn*, 13, XVIII.

106. Cf. I Cor. 13,9.

107. It is quite remarkable that Origen does not say "in the aeon to come" but "in

the *aeons* to come", which means that "ascending" to eternal life will occur in the indefinite future, as a result of free moral action of rational creatures.

108. I Cor. 13,10.

109. I John,3,2.

110. *fr John*, X. Cf. our discussion in chapter 1, §1, that Origen holds a notion of *God in Himself*.

111. *Cels*, VI, 19.

112. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247, 250.

113. For the Stoic conception of heroes, s. *Cels*, III,37.

114. Cf. Aristotle, *De Generatione Animalium*, 736b5f.

115. *Cels*, III, 80.

116. *Cels*, VII, 46.

117. Cf. *Cels*, IV,21; VI,7.

118. Exod.3,8.

119. *Cels*, VII, 28.

120. *Cels*, IV,30; IV,39; VI,3.

121. *deOr*, XIX, 1.

122. Here Origen appeals to Ps.148,4-5.

123. The view that Plato and the Greeks plagiarized the Hebrew prophets was a commonplace of Jewish apologetic, taken over by Christian writers. Cf. Justin, *Apologiae*, I.59-60; M.6.328ff.

124. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus* 247C. *Cels*, VI, 19.

125. This is Origen's conception of the *individual* resurrection. Cf. *commMatt*, 13 21; 17, 33; *Cels*, VI, 29; *homLuc*, 17; *selPs*, 65; etc. This is one more point which contrasts Origen from the Gnostics who did not expect any particular or general resurrection; Cf. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", p.81.

126. *Cels*, III, 81.

127. *Cels*, V, 59. s. chapter 5, §4.

128. *Dial*, (BGF,16,373, 35ff.).

129. s. also *Cels*, III, 28; IV, 22.

130. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

131. *expProv*, 1.

132. *selPs*, 20.

133. *selPs*, 118.

134. *homLuc*, 1.

135. *Cels*, V, 12.

136. Wis.,1,4. *Cels*, V, 29.

137. *expProv*, 24. It is certainly not incidental that in this passage Origen

repeats the words of the above-mentioned passage in the Wisdom of Solomon.

138. *Cels*, VII, 45.

139. *seIPs*, 17.

140. *seIPs*, 5. (commenting on Ps. 5, 13). Τέμνεται δέ ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ γνώσις εἰς βῆλο, εἰς πράξιν καὶ θεωρίαν' καὶ τῆς μὲν πράξεως ὅληον τῆς ευδοκίας ἐστί, τῆς δέ θεωρίας ὁ στέφανος. Τετήρηται δέ καὶ ἡ τάξις' πρό γὰρ τοῦ στεφάνου τό ὅληον, ἐπειδὴ καὶ πρό τῆς θεωρίας ἡ πράξις.

141. *homLuc*, 1. In view of this discussion, the assertion of R. Norris (*op. cit.*, p.133) that, according to Origen, soul "returns" to God through knowledge" is wrong. Origen held exactly the oppsite view. Knowledge is not a "means", as it was to Platonists, but a *result* of returning to God. Knowledge is not prior but *posterior* to "returning" to God. Furthermore, the actual content of this "knowledge" has nothing to do with the Platonic conception of it.

This misconception of Origen's thought constitutes one of the most serious distortions of his thought and is a view entrenched hitherto. In a recent book, the entire exposition of Origen's theology and exegesis is based on the erroneous premise that he held some idea of "divinization through knowledge". Cf. Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis*, Berlin/ New York, 1986; p.147.

142. Cf. I Cor. 1,27. *Cels*, VII, 44.

143. *Cels*, III, 39.

144. *ibid.* Cf. *Cels*, I, 62.

145. *ibid.*

146. *commJohn*, 1, VIII.

147. *frJohn*, XXXIX; ζωὴ δέ αἰώνιος ἐστὶν οὐχ ἡ κοινὴ ἥτις καὶ ἐτέροις ζώοις ὑπάρχει, ἀλλ' ἡ ἐκ τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς θουπῆς ἀρετῆς ἐγγινομένη.

148. This topic is of utmost importance, because it is a pivotal point which shows how Origen's mentality was not just different from but indeed was incompatible with Platonism. There is abundance of evidence about that throughout those works of Origen preserved in Greek. This point, however, is one which needs to be studied *ad hoc* as it needs a quite extensive discussion.

149. *Cels*, III, 28; *frMatt*, 214; *expProv*, 10; and *passim*.

150. Quoting John, 17,3. *Cels*, III, 36.

151. R. Norris, *op. cit.*, p.137.

152. *Cels*, IV, 19. This term of Origen's is a scriptural one and he quite often refers to John, 15,14-15 and other similar passages in which the closest relation to God is portrayed as "friendship".

153. *expProv*, 10.

154. Yet not an *absolute* end; s. chapter 5.

155. *Res* (M.11.96). Methodius attributes the term "edge of blessedness" (μακαριότητος ακρότητα) to Origen, in a passage where it is only this term that authentically echoes Origen's real thought, as the rest of the allegations cited there are absolutely falsely attributed to him.

156. *expProv*, 28.

157. Cf. *commJohn*, 13, XLIII-XLVIII; *homJer*, 11,2.

158. *homJer*, 14, 17. It is remarkable that he speaks of this aeon applying to this the term *here* and not the term *now*.

159. *homJer*, 14, 17.

160. As in John 18,36.

161. *homJer*, 14, 17.

162. *commJohn*, 2, 1.

163. *selPs*, 144; Cf. our discussion in chapter 2 about the finitude of time.

164. *selPs*, 144. In Greek the word *ἀπέραντος* ("aperantos") derives from "a-" (not) and "peras" (end); thus "a-perantos" is what is without "peras", namely what is "endless". The word *ἄπειρος* ("apeiros", infinite) comes from the same root, according to the same structure, and has more or less the same meaning.

165. Cf. also, *commMatt*, 11,4-7.

166. s. *commMatt*, 11, 4-7 -explaining the deeper meaning of the same word as found in Matt. 14,22.

167. L. and S., p.410.

168. s. *commMatt*, 10, 12-13.

169. *selPs*, 145.

170. *Cels*, III, 34.

171. *commMatt*, 16, 5.

172. *Princ*, III.6.8.

173. *selPs*, 2.

174. Cf. John 17,3. *Cels*, III, 37.

175. *selPs*, 36.

176. Ps.36,18.

177. *selPs*, 118.

178. *selPs*, 38.

179. *selPs*, 76; *selPs*, 144.

180. *selPs*, 54; *expProv*, 19.

181. *selPs*, 142.

182. *selPs*, 54; *selPs*, 138; *expProv*, 5; *expProv*, 6.

183. Cf. SVF, II,47,30.

184. Indeed, in the structure of Greek words, the final syllable "-ων" denotes a "greatness" of what the root of the word indicates [M.X. Οικονόμου: *Γραμματική*

τῆς Ἀρχαίας Ἑλληνικῆς (Grammar of the Ancient Greek Language). ed. University of Thessaloniki, 1974. p.237, §385]. So if in the root of the word "αἰ-α" (earth) the final syllable "-ών" is added, then the word "αἰ-ών" is formed; according to this structure, αἰών means "great earth" or "great land". Taking into account that Origen uses the figure "arc of the heaven" (ὀψίδα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) [Cels, III, 80; VII, 44] this conception of aeon is highly likely. The word νυῖ-ών (which in this context is synonym to αἰών) comes from νύ-η in the same way that αἰ-ών comes from αἰ-α.

185. Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, VI, 11. (s. SVF, II,47,28-30).

186. Cf. Homer, *Ilias*, 14,453: ἐπεὶ δὴ τὸν γε θίγη ψυχὴ τε καὶ αἰών. Thus αἰών comes to mean "life"; Cf. *Ilias*, 19,27: ἐκ δ' αἰών νέεσθαι.

187. Cf. Aristotle, *De Caelo*, 279a11ff.

188. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 37d. Thus the turning-point in the original meaning of αἰών occurs at the time of classicism. It is not surprising then that, almost seven centuries later, Plotinus asserts αἰών to be derived from αἰεί όν. Cf. *Enneads*, III.7.4.(44): αἰών γάρ ἀπό τοῦ αἰεί όντος. It is obvious that Plotinus thinks that the term αἰών was formed only after αἰεί and applies only to the higher timeless reality; he asserts that the real meaning of αἰεί is "truly" (being) (*Enneads*, III.7.6.). So he asserts that the term αἰών came into use only according to this linguistic and philosophical process. It is obvious that he traces back the linguistic history of the term αἰών only until Plato. However the facts are quite different. For the writings of Homer show that the term αἰών is far more ancient than what Plotinus asserts here.

189. A. Chroust, "The meaning of time in the ancient world", *The New Scholasticism*, XXI (1947): p.31, n.176.

190. Cf. Aristotle, *De Caelo*, 279a11ff.

191. *Physics*, 221b3-5.

192. In his *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (vol.1, p.42), P. Chantraine makes some speculations but he does not opt for any solution and leaves the question unanswered. At any rate, he does not connect αἰών with αἶα (eath, land). In studying Origen's conception of the term αἰών, we have taken into account the actual spatio-temporal meaning which is attributed to this term; also, having considered the most original meaning of the term αἰών, as found in Homer's *Ilias* (14.453, 19.27), and αἰεί, as found in Homer's *Odyssea* (21.69, 9.74 etc.), we assert that αἰών comes from the term αἶα and we adduce this analysis as a contribution to the actual etymology of the term αἰών.



193. As we shall discuss later, the perception of eternal life in the way described above, namely as a kind of "edge" is consistent with Origen's notion of "after" the eternal life, which is discussed in chapter 5.

194. This is clearly stated in *exhMar*, XLVII. Origen here uses the term ἀήκτω (endless) explicitly referring to the "contemplation" (θεῶν) of the "living Logos" (ἐμψυχον λόγον).

195. *frMatt*, 3.

196. Quoting Gal.1,4. *homJer*, 17, 3.

197. *commJohn*, 2, XIII.

198. *Cels*, VI, 35. At that point again Origen takes the distances from the views of the Gnostics; s. *infra*.

199. *homJer*, 14, 17.

200. There is a point, however, where the term "infinite aeon" is used, in a passage in *Princ*. Although reasonable doubt on whether they are actually Origen's own words always exists, here there is no actual question which would arise. For at that point, the expression "infinite aeon" or "boundless aeon" is a figure used in comparing the "fifty years of a lifetime here" to the entirety of time. Out of this comparison "aeon" (which is used instead of the term "time") is stated as "infinite" (*Princ*, III.1.13). Certainly the way in which the term "infinite" leaves no room for doubt that it is nothing more than a figure of speech (as, in the same way it is said of "infinte souls" (*Princ*, III.1.14) meaning just a great length of time or a vast multitude of creatures (besides, he uses the expression ὥς ἂν εἶποι τις, which effectively means "so to speak"). It should be noted, however, that in this text preserved in *Phil*, the term "infinite" is used too loosely and too lightly. This is in contrast to the rest of Origen's work preserved in Greek, where he constantly applies the term "infinite" to God only. In any case Origen's views that both time and creatures are finite are expounded throughout his works in Greek. The fact, however, that the term "infinite" (ἄπειρος) is used three times [plus one time the term "boundless" (ἄπειρος)] in just two short consecutive paragraphs is quite strange. Certainly it is unlike Origen -in the light of the rest of his works in Greek. This fact arouses some questions as to how authentically the Cappadocians who compiled *Phil* have rendered Origen's own words.

As for the translation (the Latin version of this point is extant, too) there are fundamental mistakes. H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti translate ἀείπον αἰώνα as "l' éternité sans fin" (*Origène: Traité des Principes*, vol.III, p.77) which is totally wrong and misleading, as the very word "éternité" is never used by Origen and

here the term "aeon" means just "time". The Latin translation of Rufinus at this point (he applies the term "aeon" to soul and states that as "aeternum"), compared to the preserved one in Greek, show that he has entirely distorted Origen's authentic views. Further, H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti again translate *ἀνέπαντον αἰῶνα* as "l' éternité sans fin" quite falsely (*op. cit.*, III,79- 80,515). The Latin text, in which Rufinus speaks of "ad perpetuum et aeternum tempus" is again totally misleading of Origen's authentic views.

201. *exhMar*, XLVII.

202. *frLuc*, 58.

203. Heinrich Lausberg: *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik*; Max Hueber Verlag, München, 1968. p.344, §685.

204. *selPs*, 110.

205. *Comm I Cor*, p.234.

206. *selPs*, 117.

207. *selPs*, 22.

208. *ibid*.

209. *ibid*.

210. On the meaning of *hope* in eternal life we discuss in chapter 5.

211. *selPs*, 22.

212. In view of that, it is quite absurd that P. Plass describes no less than five kinds of "eternity" asserting that this term appears in Origen with all these meanings. s. P. Plass, "The Concept of Eternity in Patristic Theology", *Studia Theologica*, 36 (1982); p.11-13.

213. In view of this, R. Sorabji's [*Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.122] emphasis on the expression in the *Princ* that God is "not only above time but also above eternity" is pointless. For the expression is obviously an interpolation of Rufinus. Origen did not use the term "eternity" and it was through other expressions that he expressed his view of God as radically transcendent to the world.

214. *selPs*, 147. A man who has made progress and experiences eternal life "within" himself, is called "the holy place of God", as we have seen in *selPs*, 23.

215. *deOr*, XV, 3; *commJohn*, 6, XLII.

216. *Cels*, VI, 25.

217. *commJohn*, 6, XLV.

218. *Cels*, VI,23; VII,30; VIII 22; *fr1-71Jer*, XLVIII; *selPs*, 124.

219. *Cels*, VII, 28; VII, 29.

220. *Cels*, VIII, 75.

221. Cf. Gal.4,26. *Cant*, 3.

222. *Cant*, 3.

223. *Cant*, 1; τὴν ἀξιέραστον ἄξει ψυχὴν ἢ Ἐκκλησίαν ἢ τὸ ηγεμονικόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

224. *fr 1-71Jer*, XLVIII.

225. *Cels*, VI, 25; *commJohn*, 13, XIII.

226. Cf. Gal.4,26. *seIPs*, 130.

227. It should be emphasized, however, that Origen does not accept the virtually Gnostic view of the church as an "emanation from a higher world" (Cf. *Cels*, VI, 35). Ἐκκλησία (Church) was the eighth member of the Valentinian Ogdoad: Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, I,1,1; I,2,2; I,5,6; Tertullian, *Adversus Valentinianos*, 25.

228. *seIEz*, 17. On the actual meaning of "knowledge" in Origen, s. *supra*.

229. *Cels*, VIII, 75. Cf. the expression for the original state before the fall as "our ancient fatherland" (*seIPs*, 117) and "mother" (*seIPs*, 130).

230. *seIPs*, 5. We translate the term *διαφοράς* (differences) as "the differentia" in order to follow the strict meaning of the word; it is here being used in the same sense that Aristotle uses it in *Metaphysics* 1057b7 and in *Topics* 139a29 used in the plural (as it is used here) and meaning "the differentia of a species", namely the differences of species or kinds. This is exactly the sense in which Origen uses the term here.

231. Philo, *De Mutatione Nominum*, 267; *Quod Deus Sit Immutabilis*, 32; Cf. *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres Sit*, 165: χρόνος is the βίος of the κόσμος αἰσθητός, αἰών is the βίος of God and the κόσμος νοητός. This is the same definition of αἰών given by Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus, as quoted in chapter 2. And yet it was Origen who has been regarded as a "Platonist".

232. Philo, *De Fuga*, 57.

233. Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium*, 85.

234. Philo, *De Fuga*, 78.

235. C.H. Dodd, *The interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, Cambridge, 1955, p.150.

236. C.H. Dodd, *ibid*.

237. *expProv*, 3.

238. *ibid*.

239. *seIPs*, 138.

240. *expProv*, 10.

241. *seIPs*, 138.

242. *Commentary on Romans*, VI,5; Quoted in R. Tollinton, *Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*, London, 1929; pp. 125-6.

243. Rufinus' awkwardness is already apparent: He discusses "eternity" in spite

of the fact that Origen never uses this term, which is not really a scriptural one.

244. John, 17,3.

245. John, 14,6.

246. I Thess. 4,17.

247. Cf. *Dial*, (BGF,16,379,35).

248. Cf. *seIPs*, 22.

249. R. Tollinton, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-6.

250. *op. cit.*, p.126, n.5.

251. *seIPs*, 48. This is a similar affirmation to that of Aristotle's in *De Caelo*, 279a11ff: τὸ γὰρ τέλος τὸ περιέχον τὸν τῆς ζωῆς ἐκάστου χρόνον ... αἰὼν ἐκάστου κέκληται.

252. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX; *Cels*, VI, 70; *commMatt*, 11,17.

253. *Cels*, II, 77.

254. *deOr*, XXV, 2; *Cels*, III, 38; III, 64.

255. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.

256. *seIPs*, 60.

257. Cf. Ps.76,6.

258. *seIPs*, 76.

259. Rom.16,25; II Tim. 1,9; Tit. 1,2.

260. H.Sasse, "Αἰών", p.209.

261. *op. cit.*, p.198.

262. *op. cit.*, p.199.

263. *seIPs*, 5.

264. What is significant in the passage above is that in one and single comment of three or four lines the term "aeon" is found in a purely natural sense, that is as pertaining to the world and yet it is a homonym. For in the first place it means the "world" as a spatio-temporal reality and then it is employed to denote the rank of life of the supreme blessedness. And also, in the same passage, the term *αιώνιος* is used in a metaphysical sense, as it is clearly applied to God Himself.

265. *homLUC*, 15.

266. *commJohn*, 13, XXXII; 32, III.

267. *Cant*, 4. A stark contrast between Origen's thought and that of Plotinus was pointed out by W.R. Inge. The following passage is quite indicative of the point which he makes: "Plotinus could not even console himself with the delusive hope of an approaching end of the world. The apocalyptic dream, which has been the strangest legacy of the later Judaism to Christianity, never consoled or troubled the mind of Pagan philosophers. They must have felt that *tempora pessima sunt*, but they could not say *hora novissima*. Deliverance, for them, was not hoped for in the future, but half-seen beyond the veil in the present. It was a different kind of *Weltflucht* from that of monastic Christianity; both alike rest

on truth mixed with illusion, on faith and courage which are still not faithful and courageous enough. The Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, which Augustine sought for and could not find in the Platonists, puts the key-stone in the arch'. (*The Philosophy of Plotinus*, 2nd ed., vol.1, 1923, p.259.).

268. *se/Ez*, 13. ἐν τῇ μελλούσῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

269. *hom/Jer*, 18, 6. ; s. also *Cels*, VIII, 72.

270. *frMatt*, 393 -quoting the similar passage from Mark 10,30.

271. Einar Molland is quite right in arguing that Origen's thought does deal with history: "Not only is salvation according to him based upon historical events, the incarnation, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ, but it is conceived of as the end of all history." (*op. cit.*, p.157).

272. Cf. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", in *Man and Time*, Princeton, 1973; pp.75-82.

273. A.H. Armstrong - R.A. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, London, 1960; p.118.

274. H. Jonas, *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist*, Göttingen, 1954; pp.211-13 ("Die Rolle der zeit bei Origenes").

275. A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, tr. by Phillip S. Watson, Philadelphia, 1953; pp. 375ff.

276. We endorse the assertions of that Origen's mysticism was rooted to the tradition of the church. As he argues, Origen's mysticism has a character which is dogmatic rather than speculative. Therefore it is a mysticism of a Christian, not a Gnostic character. Cf. A. Lieske "Die Theologie der Logos-Mystik bei Origenes", *Münsterrische Beiträge zur Theologie*, Münster i. W, 1938.

277. This is one more point on which E. de Faye has seriously distorted Origen's thought. He alleges that what Origen regards as "redemption" is but a "mystic contemplation" the purpose of which is but "gnosis". Thus, he concludes, on this topic, too, "there is no difference at all" between the aspirations of Origen's and those of Gnostics such as Basilides, Valentinus and Ptolemeus. In view of our discussion here (as well as that in chapter 5) the reader can judge for himself how grossly Faye has misconstrued Origen's thought and the extent to which he lacks a comprehension of Origen's authentic views. Cf. E. de Faye, "De l' Influence du Gnosticisme chez Origène", *Revue de l' Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 87 (1923); pp.232ff.

278. Cf. Wis. 7,17-18. *frLuc*, 50.

279. Cf. *Cels*, IV, 60.

280. *frLuc*, 50; s. also *frMatt*, 140.

281. *Princ*, III.3.2.

282. *Princ*, III.3.2.

283. A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. II, pp.319ff; 340-2. With respect to this, Harnack's conclusions are buttressed by his unqualified acceptance of Porphyry's judgement of Origen, whose culminating point reads thus: "His (sc. Origen's) outward life was that of a Christian and opposed to the law, but in regard to his view of things and of the Diety, he thought like the Greeks, in as much as he introduced their ideas into the myths of other peoples" [*op. cit.*, p.341]. The whole statement is preserved by Eusebius in *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VI,19. There is a strong possibility that Porphyry has confused the Christian Origen with a pagan of the same name. S. further, René Cadiou, *Origen: His Life in Alexandria*, tr. J. Southwell, London, 1944; pp.186ff; and H. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth*, Appended Note F "The Philosophical Background of Origen", pp.464-70. At any rate, the above mentioned erroneous allegation of A. Harnack becomes more striking that he not only employs the statement of Porphyry but also stresses that this observation can be verified everywhere from Origen's works (*op. cit.*, vol.II, p.241).

284. Cf. E. de Faye "De l' influence du Gnosticisme sur Origène", *Revue de l' Histoire des Religions*, Paris, 87 (1923); pp.181-235; also E. de Faye, *Origen and his work*, London, 1926; pp.121-141 and 146-165.

285. Hal Koch *Pronoia und Paideusis*, Leipsig, Berlin, 1932; pp. 14, 47 and 140; particularly, on redemption, eschatology and history, s. pp.33, 39ff, 89ff and 158.

286. A.H.Armstrong-R.A.Markus, *op. cit.*, pp.121-2.

287. *op. cit.*, p.129.

288. Cf. *frMatt*, 212.

289. *commJohn*, 10, XIV.

290. Cf. *commJohn*, 2, XVII; *Cels*, IV, 10.

291. Cf. R. Hanson, *Allegory and Event*, London, 1959; pp.332-56 and 364ff.

292. *op. cit.*, p.364ff.

293. Cf. M. Werner, *The Formation of Christian Dogma*, Translated from the author's abridgement by S.G.F. Brandon. New York, 1957., pp.117, 293-4.

294. *op. cit.*, p.297.

295. *op. cit.*, p.294]

296. Cf. *commGen*, 3 (commenting on Gen. 1,16ff).

297. *seIPs*, 144.

298. *seIPs*, 5.

299. *Princ*, 11.3.5.

300. *seIPs*, 5.

301. *seIEz*, 16. The Greek text, nevertheless, as edited today, has the word "πολλαχώς" (in many ways) instead of "τρισσώς" which Origen cites here.

302. H. Sasse does not distinguish any ambiguity in the biblical use of the term αἰών -apart from the current distinction of αἰών meaning either "time" or "world". He points out that "in the Bible the same word αἰών is used to indicate two things which are really profoundly antithetical, namely the eternity of God and the duration of the world". His mistake is, however, that he failed to grasp the spatio-temporal meaning of the terms αἰών and αἰώνιος when they refer to anything apart from God Himself. He thinks that αἰών may mean "time" or "world". He does not grasp any inherent connexion between these two notions. This is why he doubts on whether "The full significance of 'eternity' ... can ever be answered with any certainty." (H. Sasse, *op. cit.*, p.199).

303. Cf. *homJer*, 14, 17.

304. *commMatt*, 14, 5.

305. *commJohn*, 2, 1.

306. *excPs*, 36.

307. As, for example in *seIEz*, 16.

308. As, for example, in *seIPs*, 5.

309. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, tr. by J. Moreau, London, 1960; p.139.

310. E. von Dobschütz, "Zeit und Raum im Denken des Urchristentums", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLI (1922), pp.212-23.

311. C. von Orelli, *Die hebräischen Synonyma der Zeit und Ewigkeit genetisch und sprachvergleichend dargestellt*, Leipzig, 1871; pp.9ff.

312. J. Petersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, tr. A. Möller, London, 1926-47, 2 vols; I-II, pp.488ff.

313. H. Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament*, Oxford, 1946; pp. 106ff.

314. J. Marsh, *The Fullness of Time*, London, 1952, pp.19-34.

315. J. Muilenberg, "The Biblical View of Time", *Harvard Theological Review*, LIV (October 1961).

316. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.66.

317. Boman, *op. cit.*, p.139.

318. This was pointed out by E. von Orelli, *op. cit.*, p.64; J. Marsh, *op. cit.*,

p.179; For a "Vocabulary of Time" in Hebraic thought, s. Wheeler H. Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1946), pp.120-1; like so many others, the assertions of this author, too, are buttressed on the conclusions established by von Orelli.

319. E. von Dobschütz, "Zeit und Raum im Denken des Urchristentums", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLI, 1922, 212-23.

320. R. Markus accepts the fact that "eternity" is not a biblical concept; he adds though that this is a concept "which may help the Christian thinker in his attempt to understand the biblical *datum*" (*op. cit.*, pp.127ff; his italics). We thoroughly disagree with any "helpfulness" in this notion - far from it.

321. H. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.52.

322. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.47.

323. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.46.

324. Origen, however, avoided awkward expressions such as "history ... governed by God". His conception of Providence stands side by side with the "principle of impartiality" of God with respect to the world; this is quite indicative of how cautious he was in articulating his view of the dialectical relation between God and creatures.

325. H. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.47.

326. *frMatt*, 57.

327. H. Puech, *op. cit.*, p.49ff.

328. *Princ*, III.6.6.

329. *Princ*, III.6.9.

330. *commMatt*, 10, 3.

331. Cf. *Matt*.7,14

332. Song of Songs, 2,10-11.

333. Ps.91,14. *exhMar*, XXXI.

334. Ezek.48,31-35.

335. Num.II. In *Homiliae in Numeros*, I.3, Origen interprets the position of the tribes at the four points of the compass as referring to the resurrection of the dead; Cf. *ibid.*, III,3 where it means the four ranks in heaven mentioned in Heb.12,18-23 (some reach Mount Sion, some the heavenly Jerusalem, some the multitude of angels, while the best reach the church of the first-born). What is important out of these figures is the notion of Origen that the outcome of Judgement is a world classified in ranks of life.

336. *Cels*, VI, 23. There is a crucial distinction which should be emphasized at this point. Here Origen refers to the soul which "enters into the *contemplation* of divine things" and not into the divine reality itself. This point will be discussed in chapter 5.

337. *commMatt*, 15, 18.

338. *commMatt*, 15, 17.



339. sc. Christ, who is "heavenly", as stated in I Cor. 15,48 quoted here: *commMatt*, 15, 18.

340. *frJohn*, XCV.

341. *Dial*, (BGF,16,379,31-32); s. also *Cels*, IV,3; VIII,72; *selPs*, 4. *expProv*, 19. *Princ*, III.5.8.

342. *Princ*, III.1.19.

343. *exhMar*, V.

344. Cf. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", in *Man and Time*, Princeton, 1973; p.55ff.

345. *Cels*, VII, 42.

346. Plato, *State*, 582C.

347. *selPs*, 23. The role of grace is pointed out at several points of Origen's works; s. *frMatt*, 300: Αποθήκην δέ νοητέον τήν 'άνω Ιερουσαλήμ' ήγουν τός αιωνίους μονάς, έν αίς οί άγιοι ώς σίτος αποτίθενται είς τό αναλόγως έκαστον κομίσασθαι τήν παρά θεού διδομένην αυτοίς χάριν. (Commenting on Matt.,13,30).

348. *commJohn*, 19, VI.

349. Cf. John, 10,7,9.

350. *commJohn*, 19, VI; s. also *expProv*, 4.

351. *commJohn*, 6, XIX; On the exact meaning of this conception we give a further account in in chapter 5.

352. Cf. John,14,6.

353. Cf. John,10,7.

354. *commJohn*, 6, XLIII.

355. *commMatt*, 12, 26.

356. II Tim.2,21. *Princ*, III.1.23. Jerome renders this passage as follows: "And in another place: But according to us a vessel which has by reason of pre-existing merits been fashioned for honour may, if it fails to do work worthy of its title, become in another age a vessel of dishonour; and on the other hand a vessel which as a result of former sin has received a name of dishonour may, if in the present life it has willed to receive correction, become in the new creation a vessel sanctified and useful to the Lord, prepared unto every good work." (*epAv*, 8); cited in *FP*, p.206.

357. Cf. I Peter.2,5.

358. Cf. Gal.4,4.

359. Here Origen alludes to the body which will have been tranformed into a spiritual one, according to Paul's affirmation that the body is "sowed as flesh" and is "raised up as spiritual". This is a notion to which he often refers throughout his works.

360. Cf. John,4,21; *commJohn*, 13, XIII.

361. *selDeut*, (commenting on Deut.8,7.).

362. *deOr*, XXVII, 13.

363. *selPs*, 25.

364. s. also *fr 1-71Jer*, XI. In this Fragment, the language describing eternal life as an active state is remarkably expressive.

365. The translation of ἀποθανεῖν τὸν κοινὸν θάνατον as "dying in the ordinary way", by J.Oulton and H. Chadwick, (*Alexandrian Christianity*, London, 1956; p.421) is wrong. What Origen means by this expression is the *kind* of death and not the *way* in which one dies. The distinction which he here alludes to is the three kinds of death as he describes them in *Dial*.

366. Cf. Rev.6,9; *exhMar*, XXXIX.

367. *selPs*, 118.

368. *selPs*, 2.

369. *deOr*, XXIX, 13.

370. Due to the similarity of the notion discussed as well as that of expressions, this passage corroborates the fidelity of that in *Princ*, namely at the point where the notion of "boundless aeon" is stated. This fidelity is not unexpected as that passage is from the *Phil*. However, our reservations regarding the use of the term "infinite" in *Phil* remain.

371. *deOr*, XXIX, 14: μακραῖς χρόνων περιόδοις; It is significant to remark that this expression is used by Origen to denote a period of time extended in many aeons. Thus, in *commJohn*, he says "οὐκ οἶδα δέ, εἰ μακραῖς χρόνων περιόδοις ανακυκλουμέναις τὰ παραλήσια πάλιν δυνατόν γενέσθαι" (*commJohn*, 10, XLII), alluding to the notion of recurrence of worlds.

372. *deOr*, XXIX, 14. In this passage, the expression τῆς γενέσεως ἐπιθυμήσαντες (once willed to be born) denotes the assuming of human nature after a certain judgement. This is an expression used with an implication of "falling" in the human rank of life. Origen uses the same expression, in the same sense, in (*commMatt*, 15, 27) with respect to the notion of "falling" of "angels" and "ascending" of human beings to the heavens on the "day of judgement" (*ibid.*).

373. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX. In the Greek text the expression translated here as "never" is "in the aeon" (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα).

374. I Cor.15,26.

375. John,11,25.

376. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.

377. John,8,51.

378. Ps.21,16.

379. *commJohn*, 20, XXXIX.

380. Heb.4, 14.

381. John,14,3.

382. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247B.

383. John,4,14.

384. John, 7, 38; Ps. 148, 4.

385. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247C; As usually in this work, Origen articulates his own views using Celsus' expressions, like this Platonic one.

386. Rom. 1, 20.

387. I Cor. 8: 12, 10; *Cels*, VI, 19-20.

388. II Cor. 12, 2-4.

389. Heb. 4, 14.

390. *exhMar*, XIII.

391. *seIPs*, 29.

392. *Origène, Traité des Principes*, vol. II, p. 76, n. 52 ref. to vol. I, p. 164.

393. *commJohn*, 1, XXVI.

394. *seIPs*, 139.

395. *exhMar*, XLVII.

396. *frJohn*, CV.

397. *commMatt*, 12, 26.

398. Cf. John 1, 37-39.

399. John 1, 40.

400. *commMatt*, 10, 1.

401. *seIPs*, 22.

402. I Tim. 6, 16.

403. Numb. 14, 28; Ez. 34, 8.

404. *commJohn*, 2, XVII.

405. Cf. Ps. 114, 9.

406. Cf. Ps. 142, 2.

407. *commJohn*, 2, XVII. In this passage, by the expression "the previous life" (τὴν προηγουμένην ζωὴν) Origen alludes to the notion that angels have fallen and become men whereas men have ascended and become angels.

408. II Tim. 2, 5.

409. There is no expression such as "on earth" which H. Chadwick falsely adds (*op. cit.*, p. 361) in the text, thus changing the meaning of it; for Origen here studiously uses general terms, as he refers not only to the "earth" but to any "place" of the world. This is why Origen uses the expression *πᾶσι τοῦ παντός* which means "in a particular place of the whole world" and not "in a particular part of the universe", as Chadwick translates it. The term "universe" does not render properly Origen's conception of the world, as discussed in chapter 1.

410. *Cels*, VI, 44.

411. Not the "man", as falsely H. Chadwick translates (*op. cit.*, p. 361); for there is no word for "man" and Origen alludes to rational creatures in general.

412. John 6, 51; *Cels*, VI, 44.

413. *Cels*, V, 21.

414. *commMatt*, 15, 10.

415. *commMatt*, 15, 27.

416. Jude, 6.

417. *commMatt*, 15, 27.

418. *commMatt*, 11, 17.

419. Phil.2,10.

420. *Princ*, 1.4.2.421. *Princ*, 1.2.4.422. *Princ*, 1.2.10.423. *Princ*, 1.5.3.

424. Cf. John 10,29. *commJohn*, 19, IV. εἰ μή εκπέσειεν ἀπ' αὐτῆς αὐτοὺς μακρύνοντες ἀπὸ τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐχ ἀρπαγῆσονται· οὐδεὶς γάρ ἀρπάζει ἀπὸ τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ.

425. *homJer*, 18, 3.426. *seIPs*, 4.427. Rom.6,10. *Dial*, (BGF,16,378,33ff).

428. Ez.18,4.

429. Gen.5,5.

430. *Dial*, (BGF,16,379,35).

431. It would be beyond our scope to elaborate, but just for reasons of historical completeness of the exposition we note this: Thomas Aquinas pointed out that the notion of "eternity" involves the discussion of the eternity not only of God but also of creatures; and not only of the creatures saved but also of those damned. This, according to Aquinas, would be three different kinds of eternity. [Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, 1a,q.10,a.3; ap. R. Sorabji, *Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p.98]. Certainly the conception of these "eternities" is not the same with that of Origen's -Origen does not even use the very term "eternity" at all. However the idea that the notion of "eternal" is a *homonym* and there are *three* cases where the term eternal can be *distinctly* applied, is a perception found in Origen's theology.

432. *Cels*, VI, 25.

433. Matt.5,22 etc.

434. Joshua 18,16.

435. *Cels*, VI, 25.436. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII.

437. *commMatt*, 17, 16. ...εἰς τὸν ἀλλότριον φωτὸς <παντός> καταδικασθῆναι τόπον, ἐνθα σκότος ἦν τό ως ἐν σκότεσι βαθύτερον καὶ καλούμενον 'σκότος ἐξώτερον'. For the classifications of different spaces Cf. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

438. *Cels*, VI, 45. The expression ἰν' οὕτως ονομάσω ("so to call them") again implies that those particular spaces of the world, although radically separated from each other, are not perceived in terms of geometrical distance, but qualitative difference.

439. *Cels*, VI, 45.440. *seIPs*, 5.441. *commMatt*, 11, 17.442. *expProv*, 19.443. *ibid*.444. *expProv*, 1.445. *frMatt*, 102 II.446. *seIEz*, 7.

447. *Cels*, VIII, 52.

448. *Cels*, III, 78.

449. *Cels*, IV, 10.

450. *Cels*, IV, 72; Cf. *homJer*, 20,3.

451. *Cels*, VI, 26. The following fact is quite characteristic of how the eschatological ideas of Origen have eluded C. Bigg: On the one hand, he adduces this passage of Origen, but he seems confused and offers no explanation of it at all. On the other hand, he just adduces some references where Origen speaks of eternal punishment. These seem to him to be contradictory and regards them as "not sufficient to prove Origen's point" and he concludes that Origen "endeavours to prove far too much". So, with respect to this point, too, Bigg seems to opt for the misleading (and contradicting this very point) suggestion that in Origen the term *αἰών* has a Platonic sense, namely "endless, changeless duration" (p.277, n.1. That in Origen *αἰών* has a purely *natural* meaning has already been discussed in this chapter. Of this fact Bigg was entirely unaware.

452. *expProv*, 19.

453. *expProv*, 24.

454. *expProv*, 10. ὁ δὲ ἀσεβής, ἀπωλεία αἰωνία περιφέρεται ἐν τῷ ἐπιθυμῆν καὶ πράττειν τὰ μὴ θεῷ φίλα.

455. H. Crouzel, "L' Hadès et la Géhenne selon Origène", *Gregorianum. Commentarii de Re Theologica et Philosophica*, 79 (1978), p.330-1.

456. *ibid*.

457. *selPs*, 1.

458. H. Crouzel, *op. cit.*, p.330.

459. *commJohn*, 10, XXX.

460. Cf. *selPs*, 1.

461. *commMatt*, 10, 13; Cf. our discussion in chapter3,§1.

462. Besides, H. Crouzel has stuck to the letter of the *Princ* and speaks of "three levels, heaven, earth and hades, which make up the world" (*loc. cit.*). This is a fundamental mistake in which many of the misconstructions of Origen's thought in that work have originated. As we stressed in chapter 1, failure to apprehend Origen's perception of the world, and its movement in time, could be a source of many misapprehensions. Origen's world consists not of "three levels" but of a (non-defined) number of particular spaces. As Origen points out, it is beyond the capabilities of human nature to know exactly how many these spaces are and how are they exactly classified. The expression in *Princ* is but a succinct rendering of a profound conception. It is due to this fundamental misapprehension that H. Crouzel takes Origen's thought as dealing only with a time extended just

between now and the end of this aeon, which Crouzel names as "resurrection". Cf. H. Crouzel, *op. cit.*; also "Mort et Immortalité selon Origène", *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, 79 (1978), pp. 19-38, 81-96, 181-196.

463. *homJer*, 11, 2.

464. Cf. Leontius Byzantinus, *De sectis*, 10.6; Ἀέχουσι (sc. οἱ ὀριγενισταί) ... ὅτι τὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ὄνομα ἐπὶ ὠρισμένου χρόνου λαμβάνεται, καὶ ὅταν εἴη ἡ γραφή ὅτι αἰωνία ἐστὶν ἡ κόλασις, οὐ Ἀέχει εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ ὠρισμένου χρόνου. (M.86.1265D).

465. An example of distorted version of "Origenistic" thought can be found in a work entitled "Homilies on Pascha" and their content is supposed to be "in the tradition of Origen", as the subtitle claims. However, anyone who has an elementary acquaintance with Origen's language and views, as found in the entirety of his works in Greek, could be in no doubt that this work has nothing to do with Origen and his authentic thought. Cf. P. Nautin, *Homélies Pascales*, Sources Chrétiennes, n.36, Paris, 1953.

## Notes to Chapter 5.

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|---|--|
| 1. Rom.7, 9-10.   | 2. <i>Cels</i> , III, 62; our italics. |
| 3. <i>selPs</i> , 4.  | 4. <i>expProv</i> , 5.                 |
| 5. <i>expProv</i> , 5.  | 6. <i>selPs</i> , 118.                 |
| 7. <i>selPs</i> , 36.   |  |
| 8. <i>commJohn</i> , 2, XIII; s. also <i>selPs</i> , 4; <i>selPs</i> , 111; <i>selPs</i> , 144; |  |

At this point it is worth while citing an account of Origen's views by Augustine: "But there are other teachings of this Origen which the Catholic Church altogether rejects, and as regards which it does not accuse him falsely and is not to be put off by those who defend him; in particular, his teachings regarding purging and deliverance, and the cyclical return of the rational creation after a long period of time to the same evils. For what Catholic Christian, learned or unlearned, is not utterly repelled by what he calls the purging of evils, namely, that even those who have ended this life in crime and wickedness and sacrilege, and the greatest of impieties -yea, more, the devil himself and his angels- shall, though after a very long time, be purged and set free and restored to the kingdom and the light of God; and again that after a very long time all those who have been set free shall once more fall and return to these evils; and that these alternate cycles of blessedness and misery for the rational creation always have been and always will be? Against the philosophers from whom Origen learned this impiety I have argued strenuously in my book 'The City of God' [*De haeresibus*, XLIII

(Migne, PL, XLII)].

The distortions of Origen's views made by Augustine are apparent. Origen never spoke of "cyclical return" nor did he postulate any "alternate cycles of blessedness and misery for the rational creation". The future is simply unknown. Least of all did Origen say that "these alternate cycles .... always have been and always will be". Far from the contrary -as our discussion has so far shown and will also show further in this chapter.

What is remarkable, nevertheless, is this: Augustine seems particularly warm in condemning what he falsely postulates as the "teachings of this Origen". He said nothing, however, of the fact that what he presented as his own theory of Time is largely (if not entirely) based upon the (authentic) "teachings of this Origen" -as was shown in chapter 2.

9. Fragment 21, Koetschau, from Justinian, *libOr*, Mansi 532; Jerome, in *ep4v*, 6, quotes the same passage. Cf. *FP*, p.122, n.5.

10. Cf. Matt.28,18.

11. Cf. Luke 10,22 and Matt.28, 18.

12. Cf. Col.1,20.

13. *homLuc*, 36; our italics. The same notion, in similar articulation, is found in *frMatt*, 571.

14. H.Chadwick has not translated this last phrase at all, namely the expression "ἐνί πάντι" (on all) (*op. cit.*, p.507).

15. *Cels*, VIII, 72. καί τό τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων ἀναιρεθῆναι ἐστι τήν κακίαν' The translation of *τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων* as "end of treatment" (H. Chadwick, *op. cit.*, p.507) is not correct; for in this last phrase Origen articulates his conclusion about the "end of things" (an expression frequently used by him) and no longer uses the figure of speech in which he speaks of "treatment" etc. As we shall discuss later in this chapter, the expression "end of things" (τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων) has a particular significance in Origen's thought and especially in his conception of time.

16. *Cels*, VIII, 72. Similar affirmations of Origen are found in *expProv*, 19 and *expProv*, 24.

17. *seIPs*, 9. Again, this passage is one more point where Origen clearly indicates that the expression "in the aeon" does not mean "for ever", namely it does not denote any notion of everlasting duration. His comment on this passage of the Psalms clearly indicates that the expression "in the aeon" (εἰς τόν αἰῶνα) may well go side by side with a notion of "until", namely an *end* of duration.

Again, the terms "aeon" and "aeons" have a spatio-temporal significance.

18. *selfs*, 40; our italics. This notion of *necessity* is also explicated in *expProv*, 19.

19. *frJohn*, CXL.

20. *Cels*, II, 77.

21. *Cels*, IV, 11.

22. *John*, 13, 36.

23. *commJohn*, 32, III.

24. *Acts*, 3, 21.

25. *homJer*, 14, 18.

26. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.

27. *Rev*, 21, 11 and 3, 12. *commJohn*, 10, XLII.

28. H. Crouzel, "L'Hadès et la Géhenne selon Origène", *Gregorianum, Commentarii de Re Theologica et Philosophica*, Roma, 59 (1978); p.331. The allegation that Origen appears to have "hesitations and alternating positions" is also applied in his notions of "eternal" and "aeon". How wrong this assertion of Crouzel is, is discussed in chapter 4, §4. Crouzel simply has not grasped that in Origen's thought these terms are homonyms.

29. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVI; also, in *Cels* Origen opines that "resurrection" is comprehended only by "wise men"; (*Cels*, IV, 30.).

30. Cf. *Ez*, 37, 7.

31. Cf. *Eph*, 4, 13.

32. Cf. *I Cor*, 12, 12.

33. Cf. *I Cor*, 12, 23- 24.

34. *I Cor*, 12, 24-25.

35. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVI.

36. s. also, *commJohn*, 10, XXXV; *Cels*, VI, 79.

37. *Cels*, VIII, 19.

38. *Is*, 54, 11-14. *Cels*, VIII, 20.

39. *Cels*, VIII, 20.

40. Cf. *Rev*, 21, 11.

41. Cf. *Rev*, 3, 12; *commJohn*, 10, XLII.

42. *commJohn*, 10, XLII.

43. *commJohn*, 10, XLIII.

44. *Cels*, 6, 48.

45. *Col*, 1, 24.

46. *Cels*, VI, 48.

47. *I Cor*, 15, 22.

48. *I Cor*, 15, 23.

49. Cf. *John*, 13, 3. Using the scriptural term "orders", Origen here alludes to his conception of the world comprising various ranks of life.

50. *Job*, 15, 25.

51. *Col*, 1, 15.

52. *commJohn*, 32, III.

53. *commJohn*, 10, X.



54. *ibid.*
55. *selPs*, 9.
56. *commJohn*, 20, VII; our italics.
57. Hal Koch, *Pronoia und Paideusis*, Leipzig, Berlin, 1932; pp. 33, 89ff, 158.
58. *commMatt*, 10, 2.
59. Cf. *Matt*.5,16.
60. *commMatt*, 10, 2.
61. *ibid.*
62. Here Origen reiterates his conviction that time will continue after the end of the present aeon.
63. *Eph*.4,13.
64. *commMatt*, 10,3; our italics.
65. *commMatt*, 10, 2.
66. *frJohn*, CXL.
67. *Cels*, II, 77.
68. *frJohn*, XCL.
69. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.
70. *frMatt*, 38 II.
71. Here Origen alludes to an Orphic myth about Dionysus, son of Zeus and Persephone, who was resuscitated after he had been torn in pieces by the Titans. The myth was interpreted as rebirth. Cf. Proclus, In *Platonis Timaeum Commentarii*, 313C; Plotinus, *Enneads*, IV.3.12.
72. *Matt*.15,24.
73. *Matt*.18,12-13; *Luke* 15,4ff.
74. *Cels*, IV, 17.
75. *commJohn*, 19, VI.
76. *commJohn*, 6, XLIII.
77. *commJohn*, 1, IX.
78. *Cels*, VI, 44.
79. *frMatt*, 78.
80. *homJer*, 11, 5.
81. *selPs*, 56.
82. *commJohn*, 19, XX.
83. *ibid.*
84. Cf. *Eph*.4,9.
85. *commJohn*, 19, XX.
86. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.
87. Cf. *Rom*.6,4ff.
88. *I Cor*.15,22-24.
89. Cf. *Luke*,23,43.
90. *John*,20, 18.
91. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVII.
92. *selPs*, 22.
93. *commJohn*, 6, XIX.
94. *I John*,3,2.
95. *frJohn*, XIII.
96. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII.
97. *commJohn*, 2, XXVIII.
98. *frJohn*, XIII.
99. *Prov*.8,22.
100. *commJohn*, 19, VI.
101. *commJohn*, 6, IV.
102. *selGen*, (commenting on *Gen*.17,5.).
103. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVII.

104. The term *ἀνοκατάστασις* is used also by the Stoics. Yet there can be no similarity between Origen and the Stoics at this point. In Stoic thought, *ἀνοκατάστασις* is the restoration of the nature, in the sense of "recurrence" of a next identical world. This restoration is perceived as "self-made" (αὐτῆς μόνῃς), it is also called "resurrection" (ἀνάστασις) and is postulated as taking place infinitely in a beginningless and endless series of worlds [*SVF*, II,30-38; II,190,19-20]. This "natural" conception of *ἀνοκατάστασις* as contrasted to Origen's conception is obvious; for when he speaks of "restoration of the whole" (τῆς ἀνοκαταστάσεως τοῦ παντός) (*seIPs*, 16) there is nothing in common with the Stoics apart from the sound of the expression. On the actual meaning of Origen's conception of *ἀνοκατάστασις* we discuss further in this chapter.

105. *homJer*, 14, 18.

106. *seIPs*, 117.

107. Cf. H. Crouzel, "L' Hadès et la Géhenne selon Origène", *Gregorianum, Commentarii de Re Theologica et Philosophica*, Roma, 59 (1978): p.331.

108. s. *Cels*, II, 77 and *frJohn*, CLX. 109. Ez.17,23.

110. *seIEz*, 17. How the notion of "prophecy" in Origen underlines his teleological conception of time is discussed in chapter 3.

111. *commMatt*, 17, 19.

112. *commJohn*, 13, III.

113. *expProv*, 22.

114. Cf. John,11,25.

115. Cf. John,14,28.

116. *commJohn*, 13, III.

117. Using the language of Heb.4,14.

118. John, 14,3. *Cels*, VI, 20.

119. *commJohn*, 19, XX.

120. Cf. Eph.4,9.

121. *commJohn*, 19, XX.

122. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

123. Eph.4,10.

124. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

125. *frJohn*, CXXXIX.

126. *seIPs*, 23.

127. *Cels*, VI, 20.

128. *Cels*, VII, 44.

129. Tim.2,8; At the time of Origen it was a commonplace that prayer may be offered anywhere and not only in temples. Cf. *deOr*, 31.4; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis*, 7.43.1; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *de Fato*, I.

130. H. Chadwick (*op. cit.*, p.432) regards this expression as allusion to Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247A-C. Origen was aware of this expression as a Platonic one and quotes it in *Cels*, III, 79. His conception of it, however, is radically different of that of Plato's. In Origen this "arc" refers to the uppermost place of the entire

world, and not only to the visible firmament. The very notion of "arc" underlines the radical "chasm" between God and the world, be it "seen" or "not seen".

131. *Cels*, VII, 44.

132. L. and S., p.424.

133. *Cels*, III, 56. What Origen really suggests has totally eluded H. Chadwick's translation at this point.

134. *expProv*, 5.

135. L. and S., p.1722.

136. *Cels*, III, 80.

137. *exhMar*, III; XIII.

138. *seIPs*, 23.

139. or, "to be made into God"; θεοποιηθῶμεν; *deOr*, XXVII, 13.

140. *expProv*, 2. Cf. our discussion in chapter 2, §1.

141. *commJohn*, 1, VIII.

142. *seIPs*, 21.

143. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

144. *seIPs*, 21.

145. *Cels*, VII, 38; *Princ*, IV.2.7. The fact that Origen quite often speaks of the "soul" of Jesus is indicative of his affirmation of the fully real humanity assumed by the Logos. Hence E. de Faye's assertion [E. de Faye, "De l' influence du Gnosticisme chez Origène", p.221, n.1] that this suggests that sometimes Origen regards "soul" as a synonym to *voûs* is not correct. In fact Origen never uses the term *voûs* in a Plotinian sense -least of all to indicate the divine reality in which the "soul" of Jesus, like all souls, is originated. This is an extrapolation of Faye, quite usual among those scholars who read Origen's thought through the glasses of Neoplatonism. It is not only the divine reality, but even the creatures of higher ranks of life where Origen regards that the term "soul" cannot be applied. (Cf. *Cels*, VI, 71; VII, 38; *commJohn*, 1, XXV.). Thus, speaking of these beings he uses terms such as "hypostasis", quite explicitly contrasted to "soul" in the same expression, (*Cels*, VI,71) -but he does not use the term *voûs*; the use of this term in such a context is attributed to Origen quite arbitrarily and without any grounding at all. The term *voûs* can be found only in expressions such as "the *voûs* of a scriptural passage" or similar ones, meaning just the "truth" or the "deeper meaning" of the scriptural passage. Indeed the passage *homJer*, 15,4 to which Faye appeals here (quoting only the citation and not any text at all) proves exactly the opposite of what he alleges. We are not quite sure that he actually read that passage itself. For it is there that Origen quite explicitly stresses that the term "soul" applies to Jesus not in as much as he is God and Wisdom, but only "in as much as he is a man". In the most extreme case, the term

voûg is used to indicate the "comprehensive ability" of rational creatures (as in *frJohn*, I). At that point, however, the use of the term voûg is quite far away from that which Neoplatonist attributed to it.

146. Ps. 109,1. *commJohn*, 32, III.

147. Rev.22,13.

148. *commJohn*, 1, XXXI. Origen here comments on the passage in Revelation 22,13ff, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

149. *expProv*, 1. In the passage of the Proverbs at hand it is "wisdom" who is regarded as the "means" for this perfection.

150. The very expression "to one end" is also found, with the same meaning, in *commJohn*, 13, XLVI.

151. Ps.109,1.

152. I Cor.15,25.

153. I Cor.15,27-28.

154. Ps.62,1. *Princ*, I.6.1. That "salvation" means to be found worthy of ascending to the eternal life is also found in Origen's writings in Greek, as we have seen.

155. *Princ*, III.5.7.

156. *Princ*, III.5.6.

157. Phil.2,8.

158. s. I Cor.15,28; Col.1,17-19; Eph.1,22ff. *Princ*, III.5.6.

159. *Princ*, I.6.4.

160. *Princ*, III.6.8.

161. Cf. Gal. 4,2.

162. I Cor.15,28. *Princ*, III.6.9.

163. Heb.10,1.

164. Lament.4,20.

165. *Princ*, IV.3.13.

166. Fragment 30, Koetschau, from Justinian, *libOr*, Mansi IX.532, incorporated in *Princ*, IV.3.13. We have discussed these allegations, as well as the similar ones of Jerome, in chapter 3.

167. *deOr*, XIII.

168. Quoting Rom.8,21.

169. Ps.103,4.

170. Rom.8,21. *deOr*, XIII.

171. *deOr*, III.

172. *Cels*, VII, 42.

173. *frJohn*, XIII.

174. *ibid*.

175. Ps.41,5. *deOr*, III.

176. Acts, 5, 41. *deOr*, III.

177. *seIPs*, 18.

178. *seIPs*, 9.

179. *Cels*, IV, 57. It is here worth while comparing this passage to Origen's definition that "Aeon is a natural system, comprising various bodies [and] containing logical differentia due to the knowledge of God" (*seIPs*, 5); this comparison makes it again obvious that the term "aeon" indicates the spatio-temporal reality of the "world".

180. *Cels*, VI, 61.

181. *Cels*, IV, 9.

182. *seIPs*, 71.

183. There is a phrase in Justinian's *libOr* (Mansi, IX. 533) which was incorporated by Koetschau in *Princ* IV.3.1., as Fragment 29. It reads thus: "Now what man of intelligence will believe that the first and the second and the third day, and the evening and the morning existed without the sun and moon and stars?". This sentence actually expresses Origen's view that the "days" in Genesis do not express time. Besides, it echoes Origen's view that the existence of time proper is related to the existence of space proper.

184. Cf. Gal. 4, 10.

185. Heb. 10, 1.

186. *deOr*, XXVII, 14.

187. *frJohn*, XIII.

188. *Princ*, III.5.4. One might be tempted to assert that here Origen regards the heavenly bodies as having souls. We give an account of this question in Appendix B.

189. *seIPs*, 38 -quoting Ps. 38.

190. *commJohn*, 1, XVII -quoting Rom. 8, 20.

191. s. *commJohn*, 1, XXV; 1, XXVI; *Cels*, IV, 74; IV, 99; *commMatt*, 10, 11; *seIPs*, 35; etc.

192. Rom. 8, 21.

193. Cf. John, 6, 52.

194. *Princ*, III.5.4.

195. *Princ*, II.3.2.

196. *Princ*, II.3.2.

197. *Princ*, II.3.3.

198. *Princ*, II.3.3. our italics.

199. *Princ*, III.1.19; s. also *exhMar*, V.

200. *Princ*, II.3.3.

201. *Princ*, II.3.1.

202. *ibid*.

203. *Princ*, II.3.2-7.

204. *Princ*, II.3.6.

205. Fragment 19, Koetschau, (From Justinian, *libOr*, Mansi IX, 529)

incorporated in *Princ*, II.3.3.

206. *ibid*.

207. Cf. Fragment 10, in *Princ*, I.4.5; Fragment 40, in *Princ*, IV.4.8.

208. *epAv*, 5; cited in *FP*, p.84, n.3.

209. Cf. Rom.8,21 and I Cor. 15,28.

210. John,17,21.

211. Jerome, *epAv*, 9a; cited in *FP*, p.246., n.4. A similar assertion is adduced by Justinian in *libOr*, Mansi IX. 529 and reads thus: Now when God is said to become 'all in all' (I Cor. XV. 28), just as we cannot include evil, when God becomes all in all, nor irrational animals, lest God should come to be in evil and in irrational animals; nor lifeless things, lest God, when becomes all, should even come to be in them, so neither can we include bodies, which in their own nature are lifeless.". Koetschau has incorporated this passage, as Fragment 27, in *Princ*, II.6.2. At the pertinent point of the Latin translation of Rufinus, the expression "so neither can we include bodies, which in their own nature are lifeless" does not exist.

212. *Princ*, II.3.1.

213. John,17,24.

214. John,17,21.

215. I Cor.15, 28. *Princ*, II.3.5.

216. *Princ*, III.6.9. It is not surprising then that scholars such as P. Plass assert that "Origen's eschatology is notoriously obscure" [*op. cit.*, p.14]. Once he tried to study Origen's thought using the *Princ*, as his only source, he could not reach any conclusion different from that ; besides this conclusion appears quite convenient and rather "safe", as this view has been taken by quite a number of other scholars, too.

217. *Princ*, II.3.7.

218. *Princ*, II.3.7.

219. Cf. also the relevant allegations of Jerome, in *epAv*, 5,6, cited in *FP*, p.92, n.7.

220. *Princ*, III.6.8.

221. *Princ*, II.2.1. In the light of our previous analyses, it is obvious that the expression "after a space of time" is but a rough rendering of Rufinus; we again mention our remark about how carelessly Rufinus has treated temporal notions in his translation due to the very fact that he was not aware of Origen's conception of time.

222. *Princ*, II.3.2.

223. *Princ*, III.6.3.

224. *Princ*, III.6.3.

225. I Cor.7,31.

226. *Princ*, III.5.1; our italics.

227. Matt.14,35 and parallels. *Princ*, III.5.1.

228. *Princ*, I.Pref.7. Although the conception is Origen's, expressions such as "this world ... began to exist at a definite time" are too far from Origen's highly scrupulous use of language.

229. *Princ*, III.5.1. Here again the translation of Rufinus, namely the expression "a time after the last days" should be regarded in the context of our previous remarks, namely how carelessly he has treated temporal notions of Origen.

230. *Princ*, III.5.1.

231. Such an entirely erroneous view is also alleged by D. Balas. [Cf. D. Balas, "The idea of participation in the structure of Origen's thought. Christian transposition of a theme of the Platonic tradition", *Origeniana. Premier colloque international des études origéniennes*. Bari, 1975; p.260]. A number of extrapolations are made out of the study of the Latin rendering of *Princ* and *comm.John*, only -whereas the rest of Origen's work is neglected. All the author sees and claims to be Origen's thought is Platonism and a Neoplatonic world-picture of a hierarchy from the lower to the highest degrees of being [*op. cit.*, p.261]. He quite falsely speaks of a "created intelligible world"; the materiality of the *entire* world has totally eluded him; the radical hiatus between God and the world has eluded him too. In short, he reads into Origen's works not what Origen says but what he *wants* to read into those two works of Origen. Thus he stands in the long series of authors who have made assertions about Origen, not out of a genuine study of his works but from a second-hand repetition of erroneous views established by earlier scholars.

232. P. Plass is one more scholar among those who have adopted this wrong view [P. Plass, *op. cit.*, p.14]. In contrast to others, however, he has gone as far as to attribute the notion of a "sacred time" in a reality between divine timelessness and worldly time. We commented on that in chapter 2, §2. Consequent on his mistake he alleges that Origen's eschatology suggests that "time (along with space and matter) is then transfigured into some sort of supratemporal mode of being"; he further alleges that this kind of reality is a "changeless duration". This is a totally erroneous assertion; it is not accidental that Plass does not adduce any evidence, any passage of Origen's on which this would be grounded -for the simple reason that there is nothing into Origen's work which even remotely would be taken to suggest views like these.

233. *Dial*; Οί λόχοι λεπτότεροί εἰσιν... (BGF,16,372,24).
234. *Dial*; ... καί ἤρθομεν ἐπὶ λόχον μυστικόν... (BGF,16,373,29).
235. *Dial*; δεόμεθα ακροατῶν ισχνήν διάνοιαν ἐχόντων. (BGF, 16,372,24-25).
236. *Princ*, III.6.3.
237. *Princ*, I.6.2; II.1.3.; III.5.4.; III.6.3.; III.6.8.
238. *Princ*, IV.3.14.
239. *homJer*, 14, 18.
240. *ibid*.
241. *Princ*, III.6.3.
242. *homJer*, 18, 6.
243. *Cels*, VI, 61.
244. *homJer*, 1, 9.
245. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVI.
246. *Cels*, IV, 30.
247. I Cor.15,25.
248. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.
249. *frJohn*, XIII.
250. *commMatt*, 17, 19.
251. John17,21; 10,30.
252. *Princ*, III.6.4.
253. Is.41,22-23.
254. *Princ*, IV.3.14.
255. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.
256. *commJohn*, 32, XVIII.
257. *commJohn*, 13, XLVI.
258. *selPs*, 61 -commenting on Ps.61,6.
259. *commJohn*, 20, XIX. The notion of the incarnated Logos "coming out" of God is expounded in *commJohn*, 20,XVIII. Origen emphasizes, however, that, at the time of the incarnation, Christ was both "out" of God and "in" God. The contradiction in the phrase is only apparent; s. *commJohn*, 20,XVIII.
260. In view of this conception, the passage in *Princ* where the entire world is portrayed as the "things ... which are external to the Trinity" (*Princ*, IV.4.1.) can be regarded as an expression of Origen himself.
261. For the scriptural grounding of this figure Origen appeals to John,13,3.
262. *commJohn*, 19, XX.
263. The radical *hiatus* between God and the world is a fundamental notion of his theology. It is because R. Cadiou failed to grasp this point that he has made the erroneous allegation reading thus: "Origen's philosophical system is based upon a notion as old as Greek philosophy: the notion of participation." [R. Cadiou, *Origen: His life in Alexandria*, St. Louis, 1944, p.329]. This is quite subsequent to the fact that Cadiou has seen in Origen's work nothing more than Platonism and



Neoplatonism. One particular expression indicative of *what* he read into Origen's work. He speaks of *philosophical system* of Origen. But such a thing does not exist whatsoever. There is only the *theology* of Origen. It is a serious mistake to regard Origen as a philosopher -and he is regarded as such by those who have not understood his thought. For although Origen is of great interest to philosophers, he is above all a *theologian*. A philosopher who wishes to grasp Origen's thought should approach his work as a work of a *theologian*. Cadiou is not the only one who made this mistake. Following the above erroneous allegation, D. Balas has written an article where a series of extrapolations are based upon the wrong presupposition of "participation" and that Origen's world-picture is but a Platonic and Neoplatonic one, as we point out in note 231 (s. *supra*).

264. G. Florovski, *Aspects of Church History*, pp.69-70; Certainly, he is not the only one; M. Wiles, does the same, too, following Florovski's assertions almost verbatim. Cf. M. Wiles, "Origen as a biblical scholar", *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1 (1970), pp.454-88.

265. Indeed Origen held a conception of God Himself far more radical than Florovski does. For whereas Florovski attributes to God the category of "essence", Origen's conception of God's radical transcendence was so strong and profound that he affirmed many times that even "essence", whatever it may mean or pertain to, was "made" by God and God Himself is "beyond essence" and "does not participate to essence"; Cf. our discussion in chapter 1.

266. It is due to this approach of Origen that a certain reconstruction of Celsus' polemic treatise against Christians, entitled "True Discourse", has been possible.

267. *Cels*, IV, 99.

268. Aristotle points out that among all thinkers of the past Plato alone taught that time had a definite beginning; Cf. *Physics*, 251b16ff. Even in that case, however, space proper is regarded as beginningless.

269. Origen is aware of this view and states that in *Cels*, VI, 48. Cf. τό παρὰ Πλάτωνι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς ἀελεχμένον ... περὶ τοῦ διακοσμήσαντος τότε τό πᾶν.

270. *Cels*, IV, 99.

271. See the term οἰκονομί in the passage above; Origen strongly believes in the divine dispensation (οἰκονομία) and criticizes those who do not believe in that. Thus he refers to those who "have been deceived and think that the things under the moon are not provided (ἀνοπνόντα)" adding that "Aristotle is among them" (*selPs*, 35); s. also *Cels*, I, 21.

272. *Cels*, VII, 44.

273. SVF, II, 167,8.

274. *Cels*, VI, 71.

275. *Cels*, V, 7.

276. This was a Stoic doctrine; Cf. SVF, II, 167, 35ff. Also in Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos*, IX.338-49, 352; II. 264; *Pyrrronia*, III.98-101. Cf. Athanasius, *Contra Gentes*, 28; M.25.4ff.

However, Origen's articulation that it is the "world" which is the "whole" is similar to Stoic one only in letter. His premises for holding this view are entirely different, namely it is the *transcendence* of God - a notion which has no room in Stoic thought, which regarded God as immanent in the world. Origen's conception is completely different: If the "whole" was the reality of both God and world, then, he argues, God would be regarded as "part" of the "whole". But God is not "part" of the "whole". He is *beyond* the "whole". Besides the conception of the radical transcendence of God, this view of Origen's suggests a fundamental view of his which has been underestimated (and sometimes denied) by a vast number of scholars who overstressed and miscomprehended his allegorical exegesis: Origen here strongly affirms the *full reality* of the world.

If the world was a "lie" (as, for example, it was to the Gnostics) or it was "less" real, then it would be regarded as a "lie" which is included in the entire reality (including the divine one) as a lie, which, in the final analysis, does not affect the fundamental truth of the real existence of the "whole" which is "higher" than this world.

Origen's statement at this point of *Cels*, exactly show that such a conception is entirely alien to his thought. The world is the "whole", it is fully real, whereas God is *beyond* the whole.

277. *Cels*, I, 23.

278. L. and S., p.2008, 4.c.; We have, however, translated it as "through time" because when Origen wants to express the notion of "after a time" he uses the term χρόνος (time) in the plural; Cf. *commMatt*, 13, 1; διὰ νόσων χρόνων; also *deOr*, XXVII, 14; διὰ χρονικῶν διαστημάτων. Yet the notion of "through" is also indicated by the use of plural as well as in *seIPs*, 9, where he states that the Lord "must reign throughout the aeons (διὰ τῶν αἰώνων) 'until he puts all his enemies under his feet' (Ps.109,1). Thus, from a conceptual point of view, in Origen's view of time the preposition διὰ mainly means "through", which is the current meaning of the preposition.

279. It would be a serious mistake to assert that the above mentioned expression of Origen simply denotes the purification of a world after a consummation and to take the term ἐπιστρέφειν as meaning "returning" only in the sense of "repenting".

This, for two main reasons: First, the discussion at this point is clearly about whether or not "God returns to Himself through time". Origen has explicated this in the beginning of the paragraph. Celsus alleges that "God does not return to Himself through time". The above mentioned passage shows that Origen holds quite the opposite. Secondly, it could not be asserted that after a consummation it is the "whole" that returns to God. For what takes place is only a re-arrangement of rational creatures in the various ranks of life. So, those creatures who are transposed to lower ranks of life not only do not "return" to God, but, on the contrary, they fall even farther from Him. At any rate, after a consummation it is not the "whole" that returns to God. This "return" of the "whole" to God constitutes the eschatological perspective and the final goal of striving in time.

280. *CommEph*, p.242, 2; at another point of the same work he points that the preposition *διὰ* indicates a notion of duration [*op. cit.*, p.143,14-15]; In Greek, the term for "duration" is "diarkeia" (διάρκεια) which is composed from the preposition "dia" (διά) and the verb "arkeo" (ἀρκώ).

281. Cf. John,13,3.

282. *commJohn*, 32, III; καί τοῦ μή βουληθέντος προηγουμένως ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς, ἵνα ἔλθῃ τὰ ἐξερχόμενα εἰς τὰς χεῖρας οὐδὲ τάξει τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ οἰκονομηθῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν ὑπάγειν ἀκολουθούντα αὐτῷ, διὰ τὸ ἀκολουθεῖν αὐτῷ ἐσόμενα πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

283. John13,36.

284. *commJohn*, 32, III.

285. John,8,21.

286. Cf. Gal.1,4.

287. Cf. Eph.2,7. *commJohn*, 19, XIV.

288. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX.

289. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX-XLIII.

290. In this passage the term *συγγενής* is related to the word *διαστήματος* which is in Genitive; the expression *συγγενής διαστήματος* here means "related to the extension". Origen uses a similar expression a few lines before this point, as he speaks of *συγγενείς εβδομάδος* which means "related to the number seven". The term *γενέσθαι* is not explicitly stated but it is implied according to a common habit in Greek, namely to omit verbs which are very common and apparently meant. This happens in English, too. For we say: "once all perfected, creatures will be 'perfectly' resurrected", instead of "once they *will have all been* perfected ...".

291. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX. The allegory of going out of Egypt in order to reach the promised land is usual in Origen's thought and it refers to the eschatological perspectives of the world.

292. *ibid.*; ...τότε διά τήν πολλήν ειρήνην...

293. This is the mistake which C. Blanc has made in translating this passage in French (s. *Commentaire sur S. Jean*, vol.II, pp.548-9): "Cependant les travaux de la préparation des pierres, de leur extraction et de leur adaption à la construction, qui durent trois ans, me semblent représenter toute la durée de l'intervalle apparantée à la triade dans l'éternité.". The translation of A. Menzies in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, (add. vol.IX, New York, 1897), is far too bad to be worthy of comment; for he renders a text such as "this appears to me to point solely to the time of the eternal interval which is akin to the triad" (p.404). This is not even a paraphrase of the text, as the translator has not grasped the syntax of even secondary points of the text.

294. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVII; 10, XXXV.

295. *commJohn*, 32, III.

296. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVII.

297. *Princ*, III.5.8.

298. Cf. II Cor.5,19.

299. Cf. Ps.109,1; Heb.10,13.

300. Cf. I Cor. 15,26.

301. I Cor. 15,28.

302. Cf. John,1,29; *commJohn*, 6, LVII.

303. S. *Comm. I Cor.*; εισί τινες άνθρωποι μή παραδεχόμενοι 'τά τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ' οὐ διά τήν φύσιν ὡς οἰόνται οἱ ετερόδοξοι, ἀλλά διά τό μή παρ<ε>σκευασμένοι εαυτούς." p.240.

304. *Cant*, 6.

305. *Cant*, 1; 2; 6.

306. *Cant*, 1. ἐν γάρ τῷ ταμείῳ τοῦ νυμφίου "πάντες οἱ θησαυροί τῆς σοφίας καί τῆς γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι" (quoting Col.2,3).

307. W. Herberg, "Eschatology", in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1970, vol.8, p.694-7.

308. The "naturalistic" view is characterisic of what Herberg calls "primitive" religion where the basic reality is nature: "Nature is engrossed in cyclical rhythms, and the pattern of eternal recurrence becomes the context of naturalistic eschatology". "Eternalistic" views are characteristic of "Greek and Oriental spirituality". "In most cases eternalistic eschatologies find their background in the conception of time as the endless cycle of eternal recurrence. It is from this 'vain repetition' that they seek to escape: the 'last thing' hoped for is the deliverance of the *individual* from the unreal realm of the empirical, temporal and historical to the timeless realm of spirit." [*op. cit.*, our italics.]. Herberg's view is that that "historistic eschatologies" in the full sense of the

term have appeared only in the sphere of Hebraic religion, by which he means both Judaism and (Primitive) Christianity. In this category, Herberg includes also Islam, and notes that Zoroastrianism (Parsiism) constitutes a perplexing problem because "its view of time and history is not one of eternal recurrence, but rather one of a linear movement toward a consummation." [ *ibid.* ].

309. A. von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, (7 vols.) vol. II, tr. N. Buchanan from the 3rd edition. New York, 1958; p.319ff.

310. A. von Harnack, *Outlines of the History of Dogma*, tr. E. Mitchell with an introduction by P. Rieff. Boston, 1957; p.60.

311. *Cels*, VIII, 64. Cf. chapter 4.

312. *Cels*, VIII, 64; s. also *deOr*, IX, 1; XI, 5; XXXI, 5-6; *exhMar*, XVIII.

313. Cf. Rom. 12,15.

314. *fr 1-118Lam*, IV.

315. *fr 1-118Lam*, XXXIX.

316. *seIPs*, 37.

317. *seIPs*, 41; see also *seIPs*, 113.

318. *Cels*, VIII, 64. It is worth mentioning that Origen, who never uses unnecessary or superfluous words, here alludes to three different existential states of rational beings: "angels" are those beings of higher ranks of life; "souls" indicates the existential status of human beings after their human death until the end of the aeon (Cf. chapter 3); "spirits" alludes to the beings of the eternal life (Cf. chapter 4).

319. *deOr*, X,2; XI,1.

320. *homJer*, 15, 3.

321. *seIPs*, 68; Αυτός τοίνυν ὁ θεός Λόγος ευχὴν αναπέμπει τῷ Πατρὶ, ἰδιοποιούμενος τὰ καθ' ὃν εἰληφε ἄνθρωπον πᾶν. Cf. also *deOr*, X, 2.

322. *seIPs*, 4. ...παντός αἰοῦ διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην πάντα ἐλπίζοντος. Here one can see the teleological character of Origen's time, vividly expressed through the notion of "hope" (ἐλπίζοντος) as well as his conviction that it is *love* which constitutes the main existential pre-requisite for the *fulfilment of hope*.

323. John, 17,5.

324. *seIPs*, 4 -quoting Ps.4,9.

325. *Cels*, II, 77.

326. John 1,29.

327 *commJohn*, 1, XXXII.

328. *Princ*, II.1.2.

329. *Princ*, II.1.2.

330. *Princ*, II.3.4.

331. *Princ*, II.3.2.

332. *Princ*, III.6.6.

333. *Princ*, II.3.2. The language of Rufinus should not be pressed too far; for example, in the light of our discussion in chapter 2, the expression "infinite ... ages" is certainly not a phrase of Origen but a figure employed by Rufinus. Similarly the term "immortality" denotes the ascent to eternal life. In *Princ*, II.3.3. Origen argues that at that state rational creatures possess bodies, although the translation of Rufinus has, to a certain extent, obscured the conception behind the text, as he has not apprehended that eternal life as an "end" denotes a different status from that of the final end.

334. *Princ*, II.1.2.

335. *Cels*, IV, 99.

336. *commMatt*, 12, 34.

337. Due to the totally erroneous premise that Origen is a "Platonist" and holds a "doctrine of eternal creation", R. Norris was unable to discern the dramatic character of time (and, thus, of history) in Origen's thought. It is then not surprising that he reaches the mistaken conclusion that in Origen's thought there is "little room" for a concern with the concrete course of history as the context of man's encounter with God. (*op. cit.*, p.156).

338. Cf. O. Cullmann's discussion of the tension between the "mid-point" and the end (*op. cit.*, pp.146ff). The striking difference, however, is that to Cullmann it is only the "end" of this aeon but not the end of time. In contrast, to Origen this is the absolute end of time. Furthermore, whereas Cullmann wishes to postulate this "tension" only in terms of time, Origen had already an account of the dramatic dialectics in spatio-temporal terms; this means that the tension is not only between Present and Future, but it is the tension between Present and Here on the one hand, and Future and There, on the other.

339. This is a conception of time which has no place in O. Cullmann's conception of time.

340. *commJohn*, 10, XXXV.

341. In H. Puech's exposition of what is supposed to be the Christian view of time, there are affirmations such as "time ... progresses towards an end, a goal"; it "has a beginning and an absolute end"; "time has a full reality and a significance" and "it has not only a definite orientation but also an intrinsic meaning" [*op. cit.*, p.46]. All these are nothing more than a repetition of a view of time established by Origen. But Puech's conception of time, *as such*, is indeed quite vague there. It is obvious that he is not familiar with the problematique of time *in itself*. Thus there are roughnesses such as "the world is wholly immersed

in time". In his speaking of time proper, there is nothing of Origen's refined and sophisticated language. Puech actually ignores the relation of space to time and thus he speaks of the world as "immersed in time" whereas Origen spoke of συμπαρακεινόμενος. Further he repeats the arbitrary and ungrounded assertion that, "time runs ... in a straight line". But time in itself is a dimension which does not "run" whatsoever. Puech here (quite unconsciously) uses Neoplatonic terms, since it was Plotinus who said that time "runs" (συμπαράθξει), as we have seen. And certainly there is nothing which would suggest that time has anything to do with a "straight line". Modern Physics has already proved that no notion of "rectilinear" can be attributed to time. The "geodetic lines" of the universe are "curves" and there is strong doubt on whether a "rectilinear line" in the universe can make any sense at all. At any rate Puech is quite unaware that if there is something correct in his assertions, it is nothing more than a *repetition* of Origen's thought, of which was quite unaware as himself states further in that work. Cf. H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", in *Man and Time*, Princeton, 1973; p.49ff.

342. It is quite striking how different are the views of what Christian scholars postulate as "the Christian view of time". H. Puech regards "Christian time" as "finite, limited at both extremities" [*op. cit.*, p.46] whereas O. Cullmann postulates "Cristian time" by the exactly opposite view. H. Puech affirms an "end" of time whereas this notion is the main target in Cullman's attack.

343. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.76.

344. *op. cit.*, p.64 ff.

345. We concentrate on the conception of time and we do not need to discuss the obvious theological and cosmological differences, which are not essentially related to the point we discuss here.

346. Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p.76.

347. *op. cit.*, p.63.

348. *op. cit.*, p.76.

349. *op. cit.*, p.63.

350. *op. cit.*, p.73.

351. *op. cit.*, p.60.

352. *op. cit.*, p.64ff and p.73.

353. This is not the only point where Cullmann unconsciously contradicts himself. Indeed he employs Greek conceptions and Greek affirmations about time. As we have pointed out in chapter 1, this is due to the quite apparent fact that Cullmann lacks a knowledge of the *problematique of time in itself*, whereas Origen was profoundly aware of it. We just give one more example of this. In chapter 2, Cullmann postulates that in Greek thought "time moves is a cyclical way" [*op. cit.*, p.64-5] whereas in the New Testament "time ... is perceived as a

rectilinear movement" [*op. cit.*, p.65]. O. Cullmann is quite unaware of the fact that here he employs the most extreme assertions of the pagan thought. For the very notion that "*time moves*" is exactly a conception of Plato's. On this point R. Markus describes the Platonic conception of time stating that to Plato time moves "as the first of the moving things" [A. Armstrong - R. Markus, *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, London, 1960, pp.119-20]. Besides, when Cullmann says (s. *supra*) that "*time is ... movement*" all he does is to repeat the opinion of Eunomius, against whom Basil wrote his work *Contra Eunomium* arguing how nonsense it is to say that *time is movement*. [s. chapter 2, §1]. We already have discussed that Origen takes the anti-Platonic view that *time does not move* whatsoever but it is an "extension", namely a *dimension* alongside which movement takes place. And, as we proved in chapter 2, Basil repeated Origen's conception of time in order to attack Eunomius' views that time in itself is *movement*. The reader can see that what Cullmann actually does is to echo the views of Plato and of Eunomius, quite unconsciously postulating these views as the "Christian" view of time *in itself*. In fact, Cullmann is nearer to Plato than Aristotle was. For the latter clearly explicates that "time is not movement" [*Physics*, 221b10; 219a1 ff; 218b22]. A similar view has been taken by J. Muilenburg ["The Biblical view of time", p.238] who argues that "Biblical time is comprehended ... by its quality, by the nature of the content with which it is filled.". Thus he, too, regards *time itself* as defined by *movement* in it; in the final analysis, to speak of "quality of time" implies the premise that "time in itself" is "movement" -which is a pagan conception of time. Boman has taken a similar view [Cf. Boman, *op. cit.*, p.131]. In general, this is a view taken by a large number of scholars after E. von Orelli.

354. The terms "preceding" and "following" are certainly used in a loose sense.

355. *commGen*, 3; *deOr*, VI,5.

356. *commGen*, 3. Also in *Cels*, VIII,72. καί τό τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων αναρπεθήναί ἐστι τήν κακίαν'. This is one of the most clear statements of Origen that the expressions τέλος τῶν πραγμάτων denotes the eschatological reality.

357. *commMatt*, 17, 19. Einar Molland makes the serious mistake of following H. Koch's erroneous view that in Origen's thought there is no room for eschatology; Ch. E. Molland, *The Conception of the Gospel in the Alexandrian Theology*, Oslo, 1938; p.157.

358. *homJer*, 11, 5.

359. *expProv*, 1.

360. *selGen*, (commenting on Gen. 17,5.).



361. *commJohn*, 2, XXIII. 362. *exhMar*, XLVI.

363. s. *Cels* I, 22-25, and V, 45. Regarding Aristotle, it is significant that, in *Cels*, Origen refers to him implicitly in speaking about "the Peripatetics". Generally, in Origen's works here are some notions which are of Aristotelian origin and sometimes the Stagirite is referred to by name. But, as G. Bardy points out, these are current ideas and commonplaces of his era rather than an outcome of a direct study of Aristotle by Origen - which is a moot question. Actually there can be no assertion of any "influence" of Aristotle upon Origen. As Bardy points out "Origène adopterait plutôt, à l'égard d'Aristote, un attitude de défiance; il n'est en tout cas pas familier avec sa pensée et jamais il ne le regarde comme son inspirateur." [G. Bardy, "Origène et l'Aristotélisme", *Mélanges Gustave Glotz*, Paris, 1932, p.83]. We endorse this conclusion of G. Bardy.

J. Denis takes a similar view and asserts that it is possible that Origen might have never read Aristotle's works themselves [Cf. J. Denis, *De la philosophie d'Origène*, Paris, 1884, p. 16].

H. Crouzel, also, quite rightly asserted that there is no Aristotelian influence on Origen [Cf. H. Crouzel: *Origène et la Philosophie*, Paris, 1962.].

On the contrary, E. de Faye points out some philosophical points which are of Aristotelian origin, such as the notions of ἀνομίαι, λογικαὶ οὐσίαι, ποιότητες and ὑποκείμενον, free will and the reference to the "soul". [Cf. E. de Faye, *Origène*, vol. III, 1928, p.87, n.1].

This is one more point on which Faye goes along with H. Koch who alleges that one might discern an indirect Aristotelian influence upon Origen's thought [Hal Koch, *Pronoia und Paideusis*, Leipzig, Berlin, 1932; p.205]. But these notions were widespread in the Hellenistic era and they do not prove any Aristotelian influence on Origen at all. At any rate, E. de Faye fails to see the most important point, namely Origen's adoption of the Aristotelian definitions of *τέλος*. For, as we said in chapter 3, these definitions particularly underline the *teleological* character of time in Origen's thought.

364. *deOr*, XXIV, 2.

365. *commJohn*, 1, IX.

366. *commJohn*, 6, XLI.

367. *commJohn*, 13, XXV. In doing so Origen uses the language of Eph.1,21.

368. This passage is from the Anathemas decreed by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553. Similar is a text of Justinian's in *libOr* (Mansi IX. 533, pp.396-397). Koetschau has incorporated this text into his edition of *Princ.* (in II.8.3). The translator G. Butterworth alleges that "though they cannot be taken as literal extracts from the 'De Principiis', they express the teaching of this work,

doubtless for the most part in Origen's own words.". (*FP*, p.125). In fact, however, this passage constitutes one of the worst and most malicious distortions of Origen's thought. It is buttressed on the false premise of an "eternal world of spirits" and the subsequent allegations which Justinian made for aims of his own.

369. Cf. *Dial*, (BGF,16,373,29).

370. Cf. *Cels*, I, XXII.

371. *commJohn*, 1,IX; 6,XLI.

372. In Greek it is a rule of etymology that the final syllables *-ma*, *-mi* and *-os* signify the "result" of what the root (or, "theme") of the word indicates.

373. *expProv*, 1.

374. *Princ*, III.6.3.

375. *ibid*.

376. Is.41,22- 23.

377. *Princ*, IV.3.14.

378. *commJohn*, 2, XXXIII.

379. G. Florovski, *Creation and Redemption*, p.50.

380. *commJohn*, 1, XXIX. The passage of Origen reads thus: "to God there is not any evening and I think that there is no morning either, but the time, so to say, which is co-extended alongside with his unbegotten and timeless life, this is the day named as today (οὐκ ἐνι γάρ ἐσπέρα θεοῦ, ἐγὼ δὲ ηχοῦμαι, ὅτι οὐδὲ ηρωία, ἀλλὰ ὁ συμπαρεκτείνων τῇ αἰωννῇ τῷ καὶ αἰδίῳ αὐτοῦ ζῳῇ, (ὡς οὕτως εἶπω, χρόνος ἡμέρα ἐστὶν αὐτῷ σήμερον". For discussion on this passage, s. ch.2,§1, p.14.

John of Damascus uses all the notions which Origen first formulated in order to depict the Christian conception of time. Thus he speaks of the divine eternity stating that "it is not time, neither is it a part of time counted by the direction and course of the sun, namely what is consisted of days and nights, but is what is co-extended alongside with that timeless, so to say, temporal movement and extension" (λέγεται πᾶν αἰὼν, οὐ χρόνος, οὐδὲ χρόνου τι μέρος, ἡλίου φορὰ καὶ δρόμῳ μετρούμενον, ἢ χροὺν δι' ἡμερῶν καὶ νυκτῶν συνιστάμενον, ἀλλὰ τὸ συμπαρεκτεινόμενον τοῖς αἰείοις, οἷον τι χρονικὸν κίνημα καὶ διάστημα); [*de fide orthodoxa libri quattuor*, II,1; M.94.864].

381. *Dial*, (BGF,16,373,29-35).

382. *commMatt*, 15, 34.

383. *commJohn*, 2, XIX.

384. *seIPs*, 117. ...καὶ τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἀπελάβομεν πατρίδα...

385. *ibid* καὶ ἡ ἀπαρχὴ τῆς φύσεως τῆς ἡμετέρας ὑπεράνω τῶν οὐρανῶν ἀνηννηέσθην...

386. John, 14, 3.

387. II Tim. 2, 12; our italics.

388. *commMatt*, 14, 17. It is obvious that the expression "upper Jerusalem" here alludes to the divine reality. The figure of "mother" is also used in 16, 138, 3-5, also quoting Gal. 4, 26.

389. *commMatt*, 14, 16-17.

390. Matt. 19, 5.

391. I Cor. 12, 27.

392. *commMatt*, 14, 17.

393. John, 1, 14.

394. *commMatt*, 14, 17.

395. Rom. 6, 5.

396. *commJohn*, 10, XXXVII.

397. *commMatt*, 17, 34.

398. Heb. 10, 1.

399. *commMatt*, 17, 34.

400. *selPs*, 1.

401. *expProv*, 19. s. also *expProv*, 24.

402. Gal. 6, 14.

403. Gal. 2, 20.

404. II Cor. 13, 3.

405. Ps. 109, 1; Heb. 10, 13.

406. *commJohn*, 10, X; s. also *commMatt*, 12, 34.

407. *commJohn*, 6, XXX. Origen is fully aware of the meaning of the term "until" (ἕως) and he articulates his view of that as follows: "The term 'until' is frequently found in the scripture denoting a continuous stretch of time, like in 'until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet' (Ps. 109, 1) and in 'until you grow old I am' (Is. 46, 4) and in 'did not return' the dove to Noah 'until the waters were dried up' (Gen. 8, 7); these [expressions] have been made in order to denote a continuous stretch of time. It also may be so understood as it is found in the phrase 'he knew her not', which means that [Joseph] did not know how did 'she' [sc. Mary] conceive, 'until she brought forth' and he [sc. Joseph] saw the signs which occurred." (quoting Matt. 1, 25; *frMatt*, 22.).

408. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.

409. *frJohn*, XIII.

410. *commJohn*, 2, XVIII.

411. *commJohn*, 1, XVI.

412. Rom. 11, 36.

413. Gregory of Nyssa has followed Origen on this point, too; thus he suggests that the world is created *from God*. (*De hominis opificio*, 23-4; M. 44.209C-213C). R. Sorabji regards this notion as a "striking innovation"; (*Time, Creation and the Continuum*, p. 294; also p. 194). What scholars have not realized is that they cannot speak of "innovations" in Gregory of Nyssa unless they have previously studied the thought of Origen. For the latter has exerted a profound influence upon the latter. Least of all they can speak of "answer" of Gregory to

Origen, as Sorabji emphatically did [*op. cit.*, p.151]. Hence, again, all Gregory says is not a "striking innovation" but is an echo of Origen's views. On the other hand, H.A. Wolfson has regarded this view of Gregory as a kind of Neoplatonic notion of "emanation"; Cf. H.A. Wolfson, "The identification of *ex nihilo* with emanation in Gregory of Nyssa", *Harvard Theological Review*, 63 (1970); p.53-60. However, as regards Origen (who is the source of the notion), this is not case at all, as we have seen.

414. *Cels*, VI, 65. By a conflation of I Cor. 8,6 and Rom.11,36, the same notion is stated in the Prologue of the Commentary on the Song of Songs: "...the word 'God' is used primarily 'of whom are all things, and by whom are all things, and in whom are all things'; ". s. R.P. Lawson, *Origen: The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, p.34.

415. An account of this alleged distinction has been given by J. Rist, "Basil's 'Neoplatonism': its background and nature" in Paul Fedwick (ed.), *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, Toronto 1981, p.167; H.A. Wolfson, "The meaning of *ex nihilo* in the Church Fathers, Arabic and Hebrew Philosophy and St Thomas", in *Medieval Studies in Honor of Jeremiah D. Ford*, Cambridge Mass. 1948, pp.355-70; H.A. Wolfson, "The identification of *ex nihilo* with emanation in Gregory of Nyssa", *Harvard Theological Review*, 63 (1970), pp.53-60.

416. Porphyry, for example, portrays creation not in terms of "out of nothing", but he avers that God generates things "from himself" (αφ' εαυτού) [Porph. ap. Procl. in *Tim.* (Diehl) 1.300,2]. Plotinus, too, speaks of creation as coming from the One [*Enneads*, V.8.12.].

417. J.P.Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel Barnes. New York, 1956, p.104.

418. K. Jaspers expresses this notion clearly, namely that *Dasein* or *existence* is "the unreflecting experience of our life in the world"; (Cf. Karl Jaspers, *Philosophical Faith and Revelation*, trans. E.B. Ashton. New York, 1967; pp.63-6). A similar analysis can be found in other writings of his, too. However, this *Dasein* should not be confused with Jaspers' notion of *Existenz* which 1. is not a kind of being, but of a potential being. 2. *Existenz* is freedom found as the gift of Transcendence. 3. *Existenz* is the "ever-individual self, irreplaceable and never interchangeable". This is the context in which K. Jaspers asserts that "there is no *Existenz* apart from *Transcendence*". A comparison of this notion to Origen's conception of individual being would be of great interest. In that context one should consider Heidegger's view that the essence of man lies in existence and (as it seems from the later developments of his philosophy) existence comes to

maturity as it responds to the call of being. Particularly interesting would be to study Heidegger's assertions that *Dasein's* essence (*Wesen*) is constituted not of properties but of possible ways of being, with respect to Origen's views; (Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E.S. Robinson. New York and London, 1962. p.67; our italics). However a further discussion of this point is out of our scope.

419. In fact to say that a man exists "ecstatically" is but a tautology; for *ecstasis* is nothing but the Greek cognate of "existence".

420. *Dial*, (BGF,16,374,21): Δύο οὖν καὶ ἕκαστον ἡμῶν εἰσὶν ἄνθρωποι. We note that Origen's affirmations as expounded in this (relatively recently discovered) work have not been studied in the depth which they deserve and in connexion with the rest of his works. *Dial* was published in 1949 according to the papyri of Toura, of 6th or 7th century A.D. In the works on Origen, which appeared since that, however, the allegations of Platonism in Origen have been left virtually unchallenged, in spite of the light which this work of Origen throws upon his thought as a whole.

421. Taking the Latin meaning of the words, *ex* means "out from" whereas *sisto* means "to cause to stand". Thus *ex-sisto* (which later became *existo*) indicates the notion of "coming into existence" in the sense "to arise" or "to appear". (Cf. C.T. Lewis - C. Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, Oxford, 1962, p.702). Certainly in no case will a student of Origen's thought find these terms in his works, for the simple reason that Origen wrote in Greek. But when one wants to compare Origen's view of the world, as being *outside* of God, with the meaning of "existence" in modern existentialism, this account of the etymology of the word "existence" is quite useful.

422. *commJohn*, 6, XIX.

423. *seIPs*, 16.

424. *seIPs*, 21.

425. *Cels*, IV, 99.

426. s. Appendix A.

427. *commJohn*, 1, XXV.

428. *Cels*, VI, 48.

429. *commJohn*, 1, XXV. The allegory of the church as the bride of Christ is current nowadays and it has its origin in the scripture. Israel is the fiancée of Yahwe [Os.2,18, Is.62,4-6; etc.] the church is the bride of Christ [Eph.1,22-23; Rev.21,9-10]. Later Hippolytus interpreted the Song of Solomon as an allegory of the love of Christ to the church. As he there left no source of the tradition traced, it is Origen who first initiated the idea and anticipated all the later commentaries. Cf. O. Rousseau: *Introduction aux Homélies sur le Cantique*, Paris,

1954; pp.13-16; Also, s. C. Blanc, *Comm. sur s. Jean*, I, p.140, n.2].

430. *Cant*, 6; τῆς εἴτε Εκκλησίας εἴτε νύμφης τοῦ Λόγου ψυχῆς...εκπεσούσα τοῦ παραδείσου πρὸς τὴν ἐπίμοχθον ταύτην ζωὴν... In the next chapter, namely *Cant*, 7, one can find Origen's fundamental conviction about the decisive eschatological significance of the incarnation and resurrection of Christ as well as that the "bride" is now "in betrothal" and lives "in hope of the resurrection": ...νὺν μὲν ὡς ἐν ἀπαρχῇ λαμβάνουσα τῆς υιοθεσίας τὸν ἀρραβῶνα, καὶ τὴν τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐλπίδα... In the light of our previous discussions on Origen's conception of the meaning of Incarnation, there cannot be the slightest doubt about the authenticity of these texts from Procopius Gazaeus' work. In fact, it is due to our analyses that the text of *Cant* can be regarded as highly trustworthy and deemed as quite authentically expressing Origen's real views. In fact, the phraseology and the style of this text is absolutely Origen's one and so are all the conceptions expressed in it.

431. *Cels*, VI, 79.

432. *Cant*, 1 -commenting on Song, 1,8.

433. *Cant*, 7.

434. *Cant*, 3.

435. *Cant*, 6; λογικόν ζῶον ἢ νύμφη. Here is enunciated that the teaching of the Logos and the destiny of the world is for all rational creatures and not only for human beings; ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐστὶν ὁ Λόγος οὗτος, οὐ μὴ ψυχὴ κοινωνῶν, ἀλλὰ πλείοσι καὶ διαφόροις... The structure of Origen's world, consisted of different ranks of life and all of them related to the Logos in different degrees, is again vividly expressed. Cf. *Cant*, 1: ...τὴν ἀξιόραστον ψυχὴν ἰσχύει ἡ Εκκλησία ἢ τὸ ηγεμονικόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ; *Cant*, 2: σῶμα γάρ ἡ νύμφη Εκκλησία Χριστοῦ; *Cant*, 6: ... καὶ καταπηκτικὴν τὴν τετελειωμένην φησὶν Εκκλησίαν... εὐχραινόμενος δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ δυνάμει τῶν ὁφθαλμῶν τῆς εἴτε Εκκλησίας εἴτε νύμφης τοῦ Λόγου ψυχῆς'. *Cant*, 7: ἐστὶ δὲ ἡ νύμφη τοῦ Λόγου ψυχὴ, ἢ τοῦ Χριστοῦ Εκκλησία, διὰ τὸν ποιήσαντα τὸ ἐν, καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσαντα.

436. *Cant*, 3; ἀπορρητοτέρων ἐθέλων κοινωνεῖν, καὶ τῆς τελειοτέρας μετασχεῖν ἀναπαύσεως.

437. *Cels*, VI, 49.

438. Cf. Matt.24,35.

439. Here Origen deliberately uses the term λόγοι in its twofold sense, namely as "words" of Jesus and "reasons"; this is why he speaks of "reasons for everything" through one and the same expression. The deeper meaning lies in the conception of the incarnation of Christ. His "words", during his corporeal presence in the world, "began" the new creation and his work was another form

of the "creation" he made "in the beginning". These "words" are as creative as the "reasons" (=words) uttered in the beginning. The homonymity of the term *λόγοι* allows Origen to articulate two facets of his thought at the same time by using the term in its twofold sense. The matter, however, is quite more profound in Origen's mind and it could take an extensive analysis in order to discuss how he comprehends the relation between "words" and "reasons". There is something more than a homonymity. A *λόγος* is held to be *both* a "word" and a "reason". In his view, it is the *λόγος* that "has all the power". The *λόγος* of a passage in the scripture (namely the truth behind it) is what has the force. Yet this *λόγος* is also regarded powerful as an "utterance". So, if it is uttered, it is like a powerful "medicine" which can "clean" evil and act against daemons by virtue of the fact that it was "uttered" (*homJer*, 2,2). Thus the power of a *λόγος* lies both in the fact that it is a "reason" as well as in the fact that it is "uttered". Therefore, *λόγος* is regarded *at the same time* as having the sense of both "reason" and "utterance". Indeed, this *λόγος* is in itself a *powerful creature*. (Cf. *frMatt*, 484). This topic, however, is a particular facet of Origen's theology which requires a separate discussion.

440. John,1,1. *Cels*, V, 22. 441. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.  
 442. *commJohn*, 1, XXXIV. 443. *commJohn*, 1, XIX; 1, XXXIV.  
 444. Plato, *State*, 546A; 529ff. 445. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII.  
 446. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII. Here Origen uses the expression of Jud.6.  
 447. John,4,34. 448. *commJohn*, 13, XXXVII.  
 449. *commMatt*, 17, 33. 450. *expProv*, 6.  
 451. *seIPs*, 21; our italics. 452. *commJohn*, 10, X.  
 453. *commJohn*, 1, IV. 454. Matt.16,25.  
 455. *commMatt*, 12, 27.  
 456. The expression "after the resurrection" (μετά τήν ἀνάστασιν) is also used in *commMatt*, 17,34.  
 457. Gen.2,2-3. 458. Cf. Plato, *Politicus*, 272E.  
 459. Heb.5,11. *Cels*, V, 59.  
 460. At other points Origen also alludes to this eschatological reality again using the term "sabbatism", explaining that it means the reality after the abolition of evil. Cf. *expPs*, 77: ...εἰς τόν ἐν Χριστῷ νοούμενον σαββατισμόν, τούτέστιν εἰς ἀρχίαν καί κατάληξιν τήν ἐξ ἀμαρτίας...

461. *commMatt*, 12, 36. This notion is a very crucial one not only in general, but also with respect to Origen's conception of time and history. Thus, one would pose the following question: Since God knows everything and evil will be finally definitely abolished, then why does Origen speak of the "suffering" of Christ and his "re-crucifixion", after the historical crucifixion of Jesus? Why is Christ regarded as "suffering" since he knows that evil will finally be abolished? The answer to this question can be given only through the notion of "body" of Christ. When Origen describes the "suffering", he refers to the historical *now* where the event which constitute Christ's "passion" occur. Although evil will finally be abolished, Christ suffers *now* for what happens *now*, exactly because the relevant historical events take place in his "body". This significance which is attributed to the decisiveness and dramatic character of the historical *now* demonstrate Origen's affirmation of the full reality of history and the pertinency of occurrences in it, in the strongest terms possible. In fact, this conception of "passion" of the "body" of Christ constitute Origen's answer to those who misconstrued the character of his allegorical exegesis and alleged that Origen does not consider the role of history in his theology. [Such are the views of R. Hanson (Cf. ch.3 and n.407, ch.4 and n.291), M. Werner (Cf. ch.4 and n.292), H. Koch (Cf. ch.3 and n.408) and others.

462. The case of C. Bigg is a very typical example of how easily scholars attributed Platonism to Origen. In his work *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (Oxford, 1913) this assumption was taken for granted -the title of the work says all. The reader, however, should note that, on pp. 273-80, Bigg does not actually provide any treatment of Origen's eschatology. He is satisfied that Origen's sources are to be found in Plato. Henceforth, however, all he does is to raise questions, which he cannot answer. Instead of an exposition of what Origen held on the subject, this section of the book is full of questions which Bigg raises and leaves unanswered. This is not unexpected; for his fundamental assumption of "Platonism" in Origen was wrong. Bigg postulated a certain point of view from which Origen's thought should be approached. He does not deviate from that point of view. It is not surprising that he appreciates nothing from there and has so many unanswered questions. Origen certainly *did* treat all the questions concerning the eschatological perspectives of the world, as our discussion in this work shows. Thus, to postulate Origen as a "Platonist" is not just a miscomprehension. It is a point of view which hinders from seeing crucial facets of his thought. In view of this major misunderstanding it would be rather superfluous to comment on false assertions that Origen held that there are "three heavens" (*op. cit.*, p.273, n.1).



463. A similar phenomenon happens with the translation of the *Princ* by Rufinus: Too many scholars point out that Rufinus has edited and emended the original text and they express it in a way as though it were a great discovery; the vast majority of them fails to remind the reader that it is Rufinus himself who, in his Prologue, affirms the fact that he has interfered with the original text.

464. Tobit, 12,7.

465. Matt.7,6.

466. Wis. 1,4.

467. *Cels*, V, 29.

468. Eph.5, 31-32.

469. Gal.2,20.

470. He appeals to John 2,21 in *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX.

471. Appealing to Eph.5,30 in *frJohn*, XCL.

472. *commJohn*, 10, XLII.

473. *commJohn*, 10, XXXIX; s. also *commJohn*, 10, XLI.

474. By contrast, O. Cullmann holds that it "surrendering" of the "kingdom" from the son to the father will happen at "some moment" of the aeon to come: *op. cit.*, p.76.

475. Cf. *seIPS*, 9.

476. *commJohn*, 10, X.

477. This is a view of J. Cheek, *Eschatology and Redemption in the Theology of Origen*, Drew University, 1962; p.273. Generally, in that work, the author has committed himself to a constant effort to play down (indeed to deny) any spatial notion in Origen's conception of the course of the world. He has gone along with the view that what is "spatial" is "Greek" and therefore "contaminating" -to use a favorite term of H.Puech. So the author's effort is to prove that Origen's thought deals *only* with terms of time and not of space. In his effort to argue against those who regard Origen as a Platonist, he thinks that the best way to achieve his aim is to deny any *spatial* notion in Origen's thought. In spite of his good will, he inevitably reaches the diametrically opposite point of those who regard Origen as a Platonist. The spatio-temporal character of Origen's thought has eluded him no less that it has eluded the vast number of scholars who, quite superfluously, regard Origen a just a Platonist and Neoplatonist.

478. There are striking contradictions in O. Cullmann's thought on this point. He affirms that the "end" may either mean the end of the "present aeon" [*op. cit.*, p.76,§2] and of the creation [*op. cit.*, p.77] or "the end of the biblical apocalyptic course, which is the subject of the New Testament" [*op. cit.*, p.76]. He also affirms that the second "end" (namely, when God will become "all in all") "falls into the aeon to come" [*ibid*]. Thus he asserts that the "subjection" of the Son to the Father will occur at some moment in the aeon to come. He asserts that the

kingdom of Christ has a "temporally limited character" [*op. cit.*, p.151] and "like the church, the kingdom of Christ has, therefore, a beginning and an end" [*ibid.*]. According to his view that temporal categories express always duration and never moments of time, he holds that there will be an actual temporal period between these two "ends". What he does not say is how this second "end" is determined into the "new creation". How long is the interval between these two "ends"? what (if anything) happens in the meantime? what is going (if anything) to change into the "new creation" once the kingdom of Christ reaches its "end"? He does not deal with such questions, which should be in the core of the subject of that book. This is understandable. For, on the one hand, he has to employ a real temporal period between the two "ends" and on the other the "new creation" is bound to be immutable, according to a purely Platonic perception. Again, the very existence of time in such a reality, as well as the discussion about the duration of the interim between the two "ends", can hardly be grounded on the scripture.

**479.** Wis. 7,17-21. R.P. Lawson, *Origen, The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, London, 1957; p.221; At that point the whole passage is quoted. This expression is quite often used by Origen in his works in Greek, especially when he wants to allude to the knowledge of Physics. Time is regarded as a natural element of the world and this is why Origen did not devote any analysis to it *per se*. However, as our discussion has shown, he not only had a profound knowledge of the problem, but he also made outstanding contribution toward the formation of a Christian view of time.

**480.** Here the simultaneity of the beginning of time and space is affirmed again.

**481.** Cf. Matt. 24,35; Mark, 13,31.

**482.** R.P. Lawson, *Origen, The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, London, 1957; p.221; our italics. H. Puech portrays as a Greek conception of time the "eternal revolving in a circle" where there is no "beginning", "middle", or "end" in an absolute sense; "any idea of the creation and consummation of the universe is inconceivable" he adds. [H. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", pp.39-46]. In the same work, however, he regards Origen as virtually adopting a "Greek" conception of time. Our discussion here shows how wrong he is in taking that view.

**483.** Einar Molland, *The Conception of the Gospel in the Alexandrian Theology*, Oslo, 1938; pp.162-164. It is indicative of how the notions of "end" have been confused in the Latin version of *Princ* that E. Molland is confused himself and he can produce no answer to his question; thus he states: "But will there ever come an end of all time? That is the terrible problem to his thought. In the *De Principiis* he follows his two lines of thought to their utmost consequences, one

leading to the idea of an absolute end, the other denying the possibility of an absolute end" [*ibid.*, p.162]. E. Molland is obviously unaware of how carelessly Rufinus has treated Origen's conception of time as well as that the term "end" is a homonym alluding to different realities. Thus what is the "terrible problem" is only the Latin version of Origen's work.

484. Cf. Gen. 2,17. *Princ.* III.6.3.

485. *In Rom.* V.10

486. E. Molland, *op. cit.*, p.162.

487. Regarding these affirmations in *In Rom.*, Molland wonders: is it "Origen or is it Rufinus?" who says that. The answer is that it is Origen himself who says that.

488. Cf. I Cor. 6,17 and John 17,21.

489. R.P.Lawson, *Origen: The Song of Songs. Commentary and Homilies*, London, 1957; p.77.

491. E. Molland, *op. cit.*, p.162.

492. *commJohn*, 10, XLII.

493. *commMatt*, 12, 34: τὸν κατεπείχοντα περὶ τοῦ δηλουμένου χρόνον; *ibid.*, *infra*: τὸ κατεπείχον.

494. *Cant.* 2; σῶμα γάρ ἡ νύμφη Εκκλησία Χριστοῦ...

495. Song of Songs, 2,16-17. *Cant.* 2: τὸ γὰρ ἐνθεον αὐτοῦ κάλλος θεασαμένη, ἐπὶ σωτήριον ἀφίκετο φίλτρον, μεθ' ἀνατεθείσα ἐκείνου τῷ κάλλει, λέγει "καχὼ αὐτῷ" εἰτα τὴν τάξιν ἀντέλαβε πρὶν μὲν εἰσελθὲν τὸ τέλειον, λέγουσα, "ἐγὼ τῷ ἀδελφιδῷ μου" ὅταν δὲ τελείως ἀποκαλυφθῇ, μηδὲν καταλήπῃ κεκρυμμένον, αισθανομένη τοῦτο λέγει "καὶ ἀδελφιδός μου ἐμοί" εἴρηται δὲ πού ταίς προφητείαις, αὐτὸς Κύριος ποιμαίνει ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὥς νῦν ἐν κρίνοισι ἡμᾶς ποιμαίνει τοῖς ἐν μέσῳ ἀκανθῶν. The last phrase exactly suggests that the reality "after the resurrection" is a different existential state in which evil has been altogether abolished.

496. *Cant.* 2.

497. Cf. Is.40,8 and 11. *Cant.* 2. Origen recalls the figure of "shepherd" because it appears in the passage at hand, namely Song of Songs, 2,16-17 and relates it to the notion of "endless" appearing in Is. 40,8. It is obvious that, at any rate, the scriptural passages and figures are interpreted in a way befitting his conviction that there will be no other fall. It is the authority of *prophecy*, nevertheless, where Origen seeks to ground this conviction.

498. A.H. Chroust, therefore, is quite wrong is alleging that Origen holds a notion of "pendular time ... in terms of alternating approachment to and alienation from God. This scholar is one more among those who think that Origen's thought is but a Platonic one; thus Chroust makes the mistake of linking what he takes as a suggestion in Plato to "pendular time" (Cf. *Politicus*, 270D) with Origen's view of time. s. A.H. Chroust "The meaning of Time in the Ancient World", *The New Scholasticism*, XXI (1947); p.27, n.150.

499. Cf. *frMatt*, 21.

500. R. Sorabji (*op. cit.*, p.187 and n.54) is not right to claim that, in this work, E. Molland says that Origen did not accept an end to the series of worlds until his later writings. For this is not what Molland says here. On the contrary H. Chadwick correctly states Molland's views, namely that Origen accepted an end of history in his writings preserved in Latin. Cf. H. Chadwick, "Origen, Celsus and the Stoa", *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1947, p.41, n.3.

501. H. Chadwick, "Origen, Celsus and the Stoa", *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1947, p.44.

502. *Cels*, VI, 20.

503. The whole work of H. Chadwick's cited above is based on this fundamental miscomprehension. Hence we shall not comment on that further. We only note that the references made by the same author in *Contra Celsum*, p.508, n.1, as pertaining to the "eschatology" of Origen, actually pertain to the "end" as "eternal life" and not to Origen's conception of the absolute end.

504. Cf. chapter 2; Time as an "extension".

505. Cf. chapter 2; Time as a "dimension of life".

506. T. Boman, *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, tr. J. Moreau from the German 2nd edition with revisions to 1960. London, 1960; p.134.

507. *op cit.*, p.135; In elaborating this feature of Hebraic thought, Boman states that the rhythmic character of Hebraic thought is capable of being illustrated in several ways: "An isolated unit of time, therefore, has a rhythm which for the sake of comparison with rhythmic speech can be given the form: unaccented - accented - unaccented, or to compare it with the pulse-beat: weak - strong - weak. Thus in Hebrew the period of day and night is a rhythm of dull - bright - dull; evening - morning - evening ... Accordingly, the rhythm of the month is: new moon - full moon (or moon phases) - new moon. A year is: beginning - the months - return to the beginning; ... A human life is origin from the earth - life - return to the earth..." [*ibid.*].

508. Nathan Glatzer, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichtslehre der Tannaiten*, Berlin, 1933; p.35.

509. N. Glatzer, *op cit.*, p.36. With respect to the Old Testament, W. Herberg also explains that "...there is a unity, and this unity consists in the conviction that the present (historical) period of "wrongness" is a *falling away* from the original (protological) "rightness" (the rightness of God's creation), and it is destined for a *return* to the final (eschatological) "rightness" in which God's purpose will at last be fulfilled." (W. Herberg, "Eschatology", *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1970, vol.8. pp.694-7).

510. Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, tr. W. Trask, New York, 1959.

511. SVF, I, 3219-23.

512. On this point M. Eliade remarks that although there is a structural similarity between the "eternal return" motif and Hebraic conceptions, there is a radically different valuation of the process in as much as the process, in Hebraic thought, occurs only once and is irreversible. So the notion of "rhythm", which implies "repetition", as set forth by Boman, has facets which are subject to discussion. For he suggests that in the Hebraic pattern the rhythmic alternations proceed *ad infinitum*. [T. Boman, *op. cit.*, p.134]. However such a discussion is out of our scope. [Cf. Mircea Eliade, *op.cit.* ].

513. H. Chadwick's asserts; "when we are dealing with Justinian as an authority for the actual doctrine of Origen himself, difficulties immediately arise. I venture to think that the only question is how far he can safely be distrusted." [C.7, p.102]. We endorse this affirmation and think that our discussion in this work shows that the extent to which Justinian should be distrusted clearer than H. Chadwick implies. In fact we do not think that Justinian should be regarded as a source for Origen's thought at all.

514. *commJohn*, 1, XXVI. Indeed this is a facet of Origen's thought which has been widely misunderstood due to his method to regard history as containing "figures" of wisdom. It has not been grasped that this mainly pertains to the relation of past-future. Certainly the relation between up-down is not neglected; according to this view though it is the wisdom of God which is manifested through historical events. In such a view the full reality of historical events is *reinforced* rather than negated. Origen's prime concern is to be found in the affirmation "Those *former* bear in themselves an image of those *latter*" (Τῶν γάρ δευτέρων εἰκόνα φέρει τὰ πρῶτα) [*frMatt*, 57.]. What, in the final analysis,

this means is that Origen is preoccupied with the coordination of events in the historical plane and he does not seek to establish a relation between the historical and the non-historical. We agree with H. de Lubac's insistence that Origen's exegetical methods were influenced by those of the biblical writers [H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L'Intelligence de l'Ecriture d'après Origène*. Paris, 1950; pp.69-77] and that his "spiritual" conception of scripture is not a "de-historization" of the biblical narratives [*ibid.*, pp.246ff]. A discussion of this question, however, is out of our scope. We only note that such a conception is actually originated in the conception of history as a process *towards* salvation - a notion which stems from his *teleological* view of time.

515. Glatzer (*loc. cit.*) suggests that in the Tannaitic conception the period of election precedes the inauguration of history proper, the election is co-incidental with the creation. On the other hand, Philo postulates an "intelligible world"; although at a point he speaks as if it was created first (*de Opificio Mundi* 4.15-5.20), he insists (*de Opificio Mundi* 7.26-8; similarly *de Providentia*, 1,7) that this intelligible world was created *simultaneously* with the material world.

516. Boman, *op. cit.*, p.142.

517. We wish to endorse the assertions of Walter Eichrodt who doubts that there is a peculiar sense of time, such as maintained by T. Boman (*op. cit.*), J. Marsh (*op. cit.*) and C.H. Ratschow (Carl H. Ratschow, "Anmerkungen zur theologischen Auffassung des Zeitproblems", *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, LI (1954), pp.36-87) in part. Whether it is due to the assertion that the ancient Israelites were a primitive people and were therefore unable to construct verb-forms as in Greek (as asserted by Ernst von Dobschütz in "Zeit und Raum im Denken des Urchristentums", *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLI (1922), 212ff) or to any other reason, it is a question which we leave open. Boman is wrong in alleging that this assertion of von Dobschütz "is no answer to the question" (*op. cit.*, p.143). We do not see why a "theory of time" should by all means be attributed to a people who did not even have a word for the term "time" [Boman, *ibid.*] and did not make the slightest hint about the problematique in time, but just lived *in time* cherishing a hope for the future - a hope stemming from their religious convictions. To take the scriptural passages where this "hope" is expressed, and try to produce a "theory of time" out of it, to us seems as rather an extrapolation.

518. Boman, *op. cit.*, p.163.

519. A.H. Chroust, "The Metaphysics of Time and History in Early Christian Thought", *The New Scholasticism*, XIX (1945), p.339. In support of his view the

author cites John, 1,15; Col. 6,1; Phil. 3,30.

520. In fact, one might ask Leibniz or Boman this question: In the Hebraic world-picture, is not the reality God-world an "order of co-existence"?

### Notes to the Conclusion.

1. Wis. 7,17-18. *frMatt*, 140; *frMatt*, 506; *frLuc*, 50.
2. *expProv*, 22.                      3. *ibid*.                      4. *ibid*.
5. As H. Jonas suggests that it did to the Gnostics. Cf. Hans Jonas, *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist, I: Die mythologische Gnosis*; Göttingen, 1934; p.100. Cf. also, H.C. Puech, "Gnosis and Time", in *Man and Time*, Princeton, 1973, pp.67ff.
6. Cf. J.E.Cheek, *Eschatology and Redemption in the Theology of Origen*, Drew University, 1962; pp.315ff. The tendency of the author is to play down any spatial reference of Origen's -and this, when himself, too, has used *Princ*, as his main source. His assertions is a kind of reaction to those who "accused" Origen for being preoccupied with "space" and thus "Hellenizing" Christianity. What the author has in common with those who he is supposed to oppose, however, is that he grounds his assertions on the same criteria of what is "Greek" or what is "Hebrew" and "Biblical". He thought that, in order to prove that Origen was not a "Greek", it was enough to assert that Origen does not deal with space but only everlasting time. In doing so, he employs the allegations O. Cullmann about what is the "biblical view of time". The author faithfully follows Cullmann's criteria and all he does is to try to assert that Origen conforms with them. Quite expectedly he has made a lot of extrapolations, which are also due to the very limited number of works of Origen which he studied.
7. Cf. D.F. Lawden, *An Introduction to Tensor Calculus, Relativity and Cosmology*, 3rd edition, New York, 1986.
8. M. Capec, *The Concepts of Space and Time*, pp.xxxv and lvi.

## Notes to Appendix A.

1. Our italics; As we discussed in chapter 1, the Plural (*heavens*) alludes to the multitude of ranks of life.

2. Cf. II Cor. 4,18.

3. Cf. Matt.5,8.

4. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

5. Col.1,15.

6. Cf. Eph.3,10.

7. Ps.103,24.

8. It is very significant that Origen puts this term into quotation marks.

9. This suggests "the whole world", because the entire world is "material"; Cf. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

10. John,8,23.

11. *commJohn*, 19, XXII; our italics. Here Origen alludes to the analyses made in the two previous sections of that work, namely that even the supreme ranks of life of the world are regarded as *down* in respect of the divine being which is *up*. [*ibid.*]. This is one more figure through which he depicts his fundamental notion of a radical *hiatus* between the world and the divine being.

12. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

13. Cf. τοὺς προτρανωθέντας λόγους; *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

14. *commJohn*, 1, XIX.

15. Cf. *frJohn*, XIII.

16. *expProv*, 7.

17. Col.1.15.

18. Eph.3,10.

19. Ps.103,24.

20. *commJohn*, 20, XVIII; s. chapter 5

21. *commMatt*, 14, 17.

22. *selPs*, 130 -also quoting Gal.4,26.

23. Cf. Prov.8,22.

24. *commJohn*, 19, VI.

25. *commJohn*, 20, XVII. s. also *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

In *FP*, the translator G. Butterworth cites the following passage of Jerome: "In the same book he (i.e. Origen) says: Grant that God is invisible. If then he is invisible by nature, he will not be visible even to the Saviour." (*op. cit.*, p.99, n.1). The very fact that Butterworth pays attention to this nonsense (and, what is worse, that he gives it room in the translation of *Princ*) is quite indicative of a fact which we have mentioned in this work; that is, the fact that Origen's work has suffered distortions without having been studied. Origen quite clearly treats the meaning of "seeing" the Father throughout his works, yet it is beyond our scope to elaborate on this here. However, for a reply to this allegation, we quote a passage, deliberately



chosen from a work written exactly at the same period when *Princ* was written: it is from the Second Book of *commJohn*. In paragraph 11, he strongly affirms the doctrine that the Son has a hypostasis of his own and adds that the Son, has always been "with God" in a "perpetual view of the paternal depth" (τῇ ἀδιαλείπτῳ ῥέα τοῦ πατρικοῦ βάθους). *commJohn*, 2, 11.

26. *commJohn*, 19, XXII.

27. H. Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance mystique*, Paris, 1956; pp.41-3; also, "Origène et la connaissance mystique", *Studia Patristica*, V, TU 80 (1962), pp.270-6.

28. *Origène, Traité des Principes*, vol. IV, p.34, n.70.

29. *ibid*.

30. P. Chantraine: *Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Grecque*, Paris, 1968; vol.3, p.756.

31. Cf. Heraclitus, 12; Zeno (SVF, I, p.32); Plato, *Alcibiades I*; Aristotle, *de Partibus Animalium* 648a3; *Placita Philosophorum* (Ed. H. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci*, Berlin, 1879, p.273); etc.

32. Cf. Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, 1174b34; Philodemus, *de Piatate*, 81; etc.

33. *Dial*, (BGF, vol.16, p.374).

34. *exhMar*, XLVII.

35. *Cels*, VI, 8.

36. *Princ*, III.1.13.

37. *Cels*, V, 12 (τά νοητά ... 'κλήματα'); *commJohn*, 1,9 (υπό νοητῶν οφθαλμῶν); *commJohn*, 1,XXV (τοῦ νοητοῦ κόσμου ἐστὶ φῶς); *commJohn*, 20,X (νοηταὶ νοηταί); *frMatt*, 212 (νοητῶς δέ 'νίπτει ἐπὶ γῆς' στρούθιον -commenting on Matt.10,29); *selDeut*, (τὴν νοητὴν πανοηθίαν); *selNum* (νόηται νοηταί); This point is particularly eloquent, since the very expression in Numbers (namely, Num.24,6), on which Origen comments, is a simile. s. also, *expProv*, 7 (γωνία νοητῶς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀκάθαρτος λογισμὸς); *expProv*, 23 (ταῦτα δέ παρατιθέμενά σοι ὑπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, νοητῶς νόει, καὶ ἐπίβαλε τὴν διάνοιάν σου, ὁ ἐστὶν ἡ χεὶρ.); *expProv*, 24 (ἐν μὲν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι ... ἡ νοητὴ τῆς σοφίας θεωρεῖα').

38. *commJohn*, 1, 9; *Cels*, VII, 46. It is particularly interesting that Origen asserts that the "invisible things" (Rom.1,20) of God can be named so just because they are νοητά, namely because it is in their nature to be perceived through mind. (s. *Cels*, VII,46).

39. *commJohn*, 19,V (ἡ νοητὴ ἐπιδημία); The same notion is expounded in *homJer*, 9,1; Cf. *commJohn*, 13,XXIV (τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ ἐπουρανίοις);

*commJohn*, 20, IV (οὐκ ἐπὶ σώματα ... ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τινα νοητά).

40. Cf. *commJohn*, 13, XXII; διχῶς γὰρ τὸ 'φῶς' ονομάζεται, σωματικόν τε καὶ πνευματικόν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ νοητόν καὶ ὡς μὲν αἱ γραφαὶ λέγουσιν ἀόρατον, ὡς δ' ἂν Ἑλληνας ονομάσαιεν ἀσώματον.

The notion of πνευματικός is also related to "immaterial" in *seIPs*, 23; (πνευματικά δέ εἰσι, καὶ οὐ πρόσκαιροι διὰ τὸ αἰῶνον καὶ ἀκήρατον.).

Also, " 'Πνεῦμα' ὁ θεός, οὐ σῶμα αὐτὸν λέγομεν εἶναι. πρὸς γὰρ ἀντιδιαστολήν τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἕξος τῇ γραφῇ τὰ νοητά ονομάζειν πνεύματα καὶ πνευματικά; *Cels*, VI, 70.

41. *commJohn*, 13, XXXIII.

42. Cf. *commJohn*, 20, IV; *Cels*, III, 42.

43. *exhMar*, XLVII; *seIDeut*, (Ἔστι δέ καὶ ἡ σοφία πνεῦμα νοερόν, ἅγιον, μονογενές, πολυμερές, λεπτὸν καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς -commenting on Deut.8,3).

44. Cf. *expProv*, 3; ουρανὸν ἀπερχάζεται, καθαρῶτατον κτίσμα, ἀγγέλων τε καὶ τῶν νοερῶν οὐσιῶν οἰκητήριον. The context at that point is a discussion about the world comprising various spaces; this expression alludes to eternal life as a perspective of a human being who acts according to the word of God. Here there is no danger of misunderstanding, because Origen speaks of "place" (οἰκητήριον) of higher beings. And in his thought, "place" is always related to corporeality, as we have seen.

s. also, *seIDeut*; ὁ λόγος, οὐ σύμβολον ἦν τὸ μάννα ἐκεῖνο, λεπτὸν ἐστὶ τῇ αὐτοῦ φύσει, καὶ διήκον διὰ πάντων πνευμάτων νοερῶν, καθαρῶν, λεπτωτάτων. Here Origen suggests his notion of the presence of the Logos in all ranks of life.

45. *seIEz*, 16; Κόσμος ἐστὶν ὁ ἐκ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου, ὁ ἐκ νοημάτων θείων καὶ λόγων ιερῶν συνιστάμενος τῷ ηγεμονικῷ.

46. *Enneads*, V.5.      47. *commJohn*, 1, XXV.      48. *ibid*.      49. *ibid*.

50. *commJohn*, 1, XXVII.      51. Eph.3,10.

52. *Traité des Principes*, vol. IV, p.34, n.70.

53. *op. cit.*, vol. II, p.58, n.58.

54. *op. cit.*, vol. II, p.153, n.42.

## Notes to Appendix B.

1. *Alexandrian Christianity, (On Prayer, Exhortation to Martyrdom, Dialogue with Heraclides)*, tr. by H.Chadwick and J.Oulton, London, 1956; p.33.

2. *op. cit.*, p.336.

3. *Princ*, III.1.2.

4. Cf. *commJohn*, 1, XVII.

5. *Princ*, III.1.2.

6. *Princ*, III.1.2.

7. *Princ*, III.1.2.

8. L. and S., p.498,2.

9. *Princ*, III.1.2.

10. For a dating of Origen's works, s. M. Harl, *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe Incarné*, Paris, 1958; pp.70-1.

11. *loc. cit.*

12. *deOr*, VII; our italics.

13. *ibid*.

14. *homJer*, 10,6.

15. *Cels*, V,10-11.

16. *homJer*, 10,6.

17. *ibid*.

18. *ibid*.

19. *Princ*, III.5.4.; our italics.

20. As C. Bigg notes, this notion is found in Philo and neither Jerome nor Augustine venture to deny that the stars may have souls; even Aquinas regards the question as open. Cf. *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Oxford, 1913; p.242, n.1. What has eluded Bigg, however, is there is an evolution of Origen's thought, as exposed in this Appendix. Once more, Origen had gone far too far -and yet this fact (like so many others concerning his authentic views) has not been recognised.

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*Fragmenta ex Commentariis in Genesim*: M.12.45. (Note: *commGen. 1*, ap. Eusebius Caesariensis, "Preparatio Evangelica" 7.20; *commGen. 2*, ib. 6.11; *commGen. 3* 12,13, ap. Phil., 23.19,20; M.12.50]. BGF, 15, p.107.

*Selecta in Genesim*: M.12.92; BGF, 15, p.126-51.

*Adnotationes in Genesim*: M.17.12; BGF, 15, p.151-3.

*Homiliae in Exodum*: (Lat.), GCS 6, p.145; M.12.297. Greek Fr., GCS p.217, M.12.353, 354.

*Fragmentum ex commentariis in Exodum*: ap. Phil., 27; M.12.264; BGF, 15, p.156-64.

*Selecta in Exodum*: M.12.281; BGF, 15, p.165-73.

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